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STUDIES IN HISTORY

BY

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BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge
1892

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The Riverside Press, Cambridge,
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To My Wife.

PREFACE.

FROM a number of essays written at various times and on various subjects I have brought these together in a volume because it seemed to me that they might be of some interest to students and lovers of our history. With one exception they all bear directly on the history of the United States, and the group relating to certain Federalist leaders and their contemporaries forms a closely connected series of biographical studies in the history of that famous party. My thanks are due to the editor of the "North American Review" and to the editor of the "Magazine of American History" for permission to use two articles which originally appeared in those periodicals and which are reprinted in this volume in a much extended form and with many changes.

H. C. LODGE.

BOSTON, *March* 8, 1884.

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STUDIES IN HISTORY.

THE PURITANS AND THE RESTORATION.

The world is fortunate in having at last a Life of John Milton in every way worthy of its subject. It is high praise to the biographer to be able to say this, but Mr. Masson entirely deserves it. In six volumes he has told the story of Milton's life, and of the stirring times in which the poet lived; and the work, as a whole, is one upon which any man may be well content to rest his literary reputation. Mr. Masson has shown throughout patience, care, and thoroughness of investigation and research in a high degree, and there are many passages conspicuous for penetrating and original criticism and for forcible and picturesque description. The work is of course open to criticism, but chiefly in matter of form. It is not well, as a rule, to combine history and biography as Mr. Masson has done, for the interest is thus divided; the reader is continually taken back and forth from the general to the particular, from the nation to the individual. Some plan very like this would be absolutely necessary in writing the life of Oliver Cromwell, but it is

not, except for a brief period, essential in the case of John Milton. Then, again, Mr. Masson's love and admiration for his hero have carried him away into almost unlimited detail, which becomes at times mere antiquarianism. Such, for example, in large measure, is the last chapter in regard to Milton's remote descendants and the famous editions of his works. The one subject is suited to genealogy, the other to bibliography; but unrestrained indulgence in them here weighs down the brilliant story of a life of absorbing and dramatic interest. The facts known with absolute certainty concerning Milton's last years are very meagre, and might be fully and effectively stated in a few pages; but Mr. Masson devotes chapters to speculations, not only as to where and how Milton lived after the fall of the Commonwealth, but as to his probable thoughts and feelings with reference to current events. Much of this speculation is very interesting, and in the descriptions of Milton and others in supposed but likely situations, Mr. Masson shows a great deal of imagination and artistic skill. Nevertheless, the tendency is to prolong these imaginings beyond judicious limits, and the same disposition to run into detail is manifested here and there in the more purely historical portions of the book, as in the minute accounts and frequent summaries of the fates of the regicides. All this tends to distract the attention instead of concentrating it, and thus to obscure the very great merits of the work as a whole.

Yet after all deductions and criticisms have been

made, this "Life of Milton" is a fine and valuable contribution to English history and one of great and enduring worth, and the concluding volume [1] is not the least important part of it, for it deals with a subject of very deep interest and with a great historical problem. The Restoration was a most important period, and the fate of the Puritan party, after the accession of Charles II., is a matter of absorbing historical interest. What that fate was is well known, but its causes are not even yet wholly explained, although in the main they can be understood. The questions to which the fall and subsequent history of the Puritans give rise are not fully answered in this volume, and probably never can be, but Mr. Masson has thrown a great deal of light upon them and offers many striking suggestions. It is in the light thus given and with the aid of these suggestions that I wish to consider the Puritans and the Restoration.

The period of the Restoration is one of strong contrasts and of great events. It is also without exception the most contemptible period, politically and morally, in the whole history of the English race, albeit tradition has gilded its vices and given to it virtues which it never possessed. For generations — and even now, no doubt, in certain portions of English society — it derived countenance and protection from the creed which set up Charles I. as a saint, termed the Puritan revolution an unholy rebellion, and consigned Oliver

[1] *The Life of John Milton and History of his Time.* By David Masson, M. A., LL. D. Vol. vi. 1660–1674.

Cromwell to the direst limbo of historical criminals. Slowly but surely, however, time has done its work. Confusing and misleading details have been put in order or have disappeared; the veil of interested deception has been rent asunder, and solid, substantial truth has compelled acknowledgment. Within the last half century Macaulay and Carlyle have laid their strong hands upon the historical fabric reared by fervent royalism nearly two centuries ago, and have torn it down. Others have followed through the breach thus made, and it is now no longer necessary to enter into argument to show that Oliver Cromwell was the greatest soldier and statesman combined that England has ever produced; that John Hampden is, on the whole, the finest representative of the English gentleman, and John Pym one of the greatest, as he was one of the earliest, in the splendid line of English parliamentary leaders. The grandeur of the period which opened with the Long Parliament and closed with the death of the Protector is established beyond the possibility of doubt. During that period church and crown were overthrown, a king was executed, great battles were fought, Scotland was conquered, and Ireland pacified for the first and last time. From a condition of abject debasement abroad England was raised to a commanding position in the civilized world. Robert Blake established once more her naval supremacy, the Dutch were defeated, new colonies were added to the empire, Puritan soldiers won the admiration of Europe, and there was no western monarch who did

not respect and fear the name of Oliver Cromwell and of the Commonwealth he protected.

The great Puritan died. There was a short period of weak government and jarring factions; and then Monk, at the head of the Puritan army, restored Charles II. to the throne which he could never have gained for himself. Then came the twenty years and more of the Restoration. What can they show in comparison with that which had gone before? From being the first power in Europe, England sank into the position of a French dependency. The sovereign of England became a pensioner of the French king, and English statesmen received bribes from the same defiling source. In two doubtful wars with the chief Protestant state of Europe, England suffered humiliation and defeat. The Dutch burned English ships at Chatham, and fire and pestilence desolated the capital. The statute-book was loaded with oppressive laws against the non-conformists, while Charles and his brother wove secret plots to bring back the Roman Church. Politics were stifled in intrigue and agitation, which resulted in the infamous popish plot and in the ill-starred rebellion of Monmouth. Corruption held full sway in every department of the public service, and the thriving colonies of America were wrung to yield a subsistence to needy and dissolute courtiers. The morals of the court were on a level with the public policy. There was, in fact, no morality among the ruling classes, and the viciousness of public affairs was increased tenfold in private life. From the king, with

his harem of mistresses, home-bred and imported, down to the lowest hanger-on at Whitehall, there was neither sense, morals, nor manners in the court, as Charles himself said of Lord Jeffries, in a comparison more forcible than delicate. To know how vile it all was it is only necessary to read De Grammont. There is, moreover, no greater mistake than to accept the pleasant legend that this moral rottenness had a fair exterior, and as this fact has never been put better, so far as I am aware, than by Mr. Masson, I will quote his words: —

"The familiar representation of the court of Charles II. as a court of fine and gracious manners, — a court in which 'vice itself lost half its evil by losing all its grossness,' — is a lying tradition. The principal men and women of that court, though dressed finely and living luxuriously, spoke and thought among themselves in the language of the shambles and the dissecting-room."

Coarse debauchery was the characteristic of the court, and meanness in the most superlative degree that of the politics, of Charles II.

What was there to redeem all this? According to the popular theory of that day the reign of the saints had crushed out all the finer and more graceful parts of human existence, and arts and literature had withered before them. Here at least the Restoration — genial, jovial, with relaxed morals and the sunshine of royal favor — should have produced a plentiful harvest. Tradition affirms that this was the case; and here again tradition lies. It is true that

the scientific movement, begun under the Commonwealth, made rapid progress, and that the Royal Society favored by Charles, who had, or feigned to have, a pretty taste for science, grew apace and did good work. This was the best, indeed almost the only, intellectual glory of the period of the Restoration. It is also true that the theatres came back with Charles, but that was all. The literature of the Restoration, so called, belonged at first to an earlier period, and never produced anything of great credit to the English race, with the exception of that which bore the names of John Dryden and Samuel Butler. The theory was that literature revived with splendid effulgence when the king got his own again. It is well worth while to follow Mr. Masson's examination of this question, and witness his destruction of this pleasing royalist fancy.

After the Restoration in 1660 we find Davenant, Denham, Waller, Cowley, and Marvell the most prominent names in the literature of the day, — all survivals from the reign of Charles I. and from the Commonwealth, and all men whose best work had been already done. There were, besides, a number of inferior dramatists, such as Cokain and Crowne, and verse-writers and poetasters among the courtiers, like Sedley and Sackville, Earl of Dorset. John Dryden, of Puritan family and origin, had turned from eulogies of Cromwell to panegyrics on Charles, and was at this period pouring out his plays, which are chiefly remarkable as showing how very badly a man of real

genius can write. They are on this account a literary curiosity, but few persons now read them, and those who do so waste their labor. Dryden's tragedies are not only unreal, but dull to the last point; and his comedies are not merely dull, but heavily and stupidly coarse. The system of rhyming tragedies, approved by Charles and adopted by Dryden, was a failure, and not even the poet's command of language and showy and sometimes splendid rhetoric have been able to hide poverty of thought and failure to delineate character, or to save his plays from deserved oblivion. It was not until the Restoration period was in its second decade that Dryden, by his manly and vigorous satires, by odes which are among the best in the language, and later still by his translation of Virgil, won the high place to which his great talents entitled him. Even his genius was for many years debased and distorted by the atmosphere in which he lived.

Another man of genuine ability, who, although well advanced in life, may fairly claim a place in the literature of the Restoration, was Butler. Although the merits of "Hudibras" have been exaggerated, because largely taken on trust, yet no one can question the power and merit of the poem. It is a rough, strong, grotesque satire, full of point and force, and did more to put the defects of the Puritans in a ridiculous and glaring light, and give popular currency to their faults, real and supposed, than anything which has ever been written. The terse and stinging sentences of the mock epic were, when they first ap-

peared, in every one's mouth; but their author lived and died a neglected and morose man, bequeathing a volume of posthumous papers, full of bitter flings against mankind.

There was in fact no great outburst of literary activity at the beginning of the Restoration period, and nothing that bears the stamp of that event. With the exception of Dryden and Butler, there was no literature of the Restoration, strictly speaking, until we come to the writers brought forth by the opening of the theatres, — to Congreve, Wycherly, Farquhar, and Van Brugh. These dramatists were unquestionably the true children of the Restoration, and by their works we may know them. In other fields there was an equal barrenness. If we except John Locke and Jeremy Taylor, there was hardly a single writer of the first eminence — for Hobbes belonged to a past age — among those who figured in London and in court society.

Yet during the early years of Charles's reign and at the time of the most marked literary dearth, there was a great literature, although it was not of the Court or of the Restoration. It was at that time that two of the most splendid works in the whole range of English literature were given to the world. One was written by a religious tinker; the other by the blind Latin secretary of Cromwell. From Bedford Jail came "Pilgrim's Progress," and from a small house in an obscure London street, "Paradise Lost," the greatest of English epics. Puritanism was bitterly

hostile to theatres, to amusements, to all the lighter and more pleasing elements of life. The Puritans rose to power by hard fighting, and during the conflict and after their ascendency was assured they produced little or nothing in the way of literature. After their fall the world of fashion looked to the men of the new era for a literature relieved from the shackles of a hypocritical asceticism. But the Muse that came with Charles was, like most of his companions, male and female, a debauched creature at best, who smacked more of intrigue and midnight revels than of aught else; and it was from the beaten adherents of a fallen cause that the true poetry and the great literature of the time emanated, full of imaginative fire and religious fervor. It was an uncongenial atmosphere for such work; but while the "Pilgrim's Progress" has passed through countless editions and is read wherever the English speech is known, and while "Paradise Lost" has continued to issue from the press in new forms, and has attracted hosts of commentators and readers, the literature of the Restoration — the literature of Sedley and Sackville, of Congreve and Wycherly, of Killigrew and Rochester — has gradually slipped out of sight, and is remembered merely for a few clever lyrics, and read only by those who are curious in the matter of old plays. The writings of the two Puritans, born in obscurity and shadowed by contempt and defeat, have thriven and grown from their birth, and struck their roots deep down into the hearts of all English-speaking people,

but the literature of the Restoration, brought forth in the sunshine of royal and court favor, has, with the exception of Dryden's poetry and Butler's "Hudibras," steadily declined in popular favor. The cause of this difference is not far to seek. The work of the Puritans was that of men who believed in a great cause; and earnest genius is not found among the supporters of such a monarch as Charles, who represented nothing but himself, was unutterably mean, and was identified with a policy of which the most conspicuous quality was falsehood. In a society with such a head and in such a court, there could be no great literature; no thoroughly fine genius could flourish or find an abiding-place among such surroundings. Successful Puritanism may have suppressed imaginative literature, but the Restoration had not the capacity to produce it. When Puritanism fell, the imaginative side of its character was no longer hidden and repressed, but found expression in the works of Milton and Bunyan.

Charles and his court were not the whole of the Restoration period, but they were at once the most important and the worst part of it. The king and his courtiers and favorites were the men who set the fashion, who made vice the stamp of birth and breeding, who degraded England at home and abroad, and plotted for the return of a hated religion. The only real strength Charles possessed lay in a shrewd selfishness, which kept him from extremes, and which never lost sight of his one great aim, — never to go again

upon his travels. The stupider and more honest James pushed openly the policy which Charles had carried on in the dark, and reaped the harvest which his brother had sown by being driven from his throne.

In this miserable period improvement begins only as we descend in the scale of fashion, society, and office. The narrow-minded cavalier Parliament, which sat so long, was finally so corrupt, and which abused its power so grievously, was still a respectable body in comparison with the court faction. It was sound in a certain way, and had some redeeming traits. Charles, for instance, did not dare to let it know of his bargains with Louis; for those little transactions would have cost him his crown, even with the adherents of Church and State. The cavalier Parliament was capable of the most unmanly vengeance upon its fallen foes, and indulged in virulent religious intolerance; but it hated the papacy, and in the excitement of the popish plot were ready to go almost any lengths against the crown in defense of Protestantism. The royalist knights and squires could descend to the unspeakable meanness, to the pitiable revenge, of tearing up the grave of Oliver Cromwell, and placing the skull of the greatest ruler England ever had upon Temple Bar; they could drag from their resting-place the bones of Robert Blake, in whose lifetime no Dutch fleet would have burned shipping in the Thames: yet at the same time they were ready to give freely and fight bravely against England's enemies, and they would not, as a body, have sold their country as their king was doing.

If we descend a step farther we come on the scattered strength of Puritanism, the great middle classes, — the tradesmen, the farmers, the gentry, and the dissenting clergy. They were beaten, broken, and groaning under the inflictions of the Test Act, the Five-Mile Act, and other similar laws; many of their leaders had perished on the scaffold, others were in exile, fleeing through the hamlets of New England or sheltered among the mountains of the Swiss Republic; yet their spirit was still the same. No people were ever put to a harder trial than they were when relieved from oppression by the royal suspension of the persecuting acts of Parliament. The device was a shrewd one, but it failed. The Puritans and the dissenting sects preferred persecution by law to immunity secured by an unwarrantable stretch of the royal prerogative, and designed to open the door to the re-establishment of the Church of Rome. There are few acts in history more heroic than the quiet manner in which the English dissenters, without organization and without leaders, gave their support to the Parliament which persecuted them, and sustained hateful laws in opposition to the king, who, for purposes of his own, gave them illegal relief as a means of helping the papist cause.

But from whatever point we approach the Restoration and study its features, the one ever-recurring problem is the position of the Puritans. Why were they an utterly beaten, broken, and helpless people? Whatever their mistakes may have been, they had

done great deeds. They had shattered Church and State; they had fought and won innumerable battles; they had produced some of the greatest statesmen and generals in English history; they had raised England to a great place in the world, and had governed strongly and well. What had become of this powerful body of men? Where was the great country party of the Long Parliament? Where were the soldiers who had stood silent before Charles on Blackheath? They were in a numerical minority, no doubt, but they were strong enough to have drenched England in blood if they had been united; and yet they did not have even the respect accorded to an opposition. They do not appear even as an opposition. They had no standing as a party, and no political power or influence. They are heard of during the Restoration simply as the victims of persecuting acts. The contrast between the Puritan party at the death of Oliver and the Puritan party five years later is tremendous. It may be argued that this was simply the result of a crushing political defeat. But this theory falls to the ground if we examine the condition of the Puritan states beyond the Atlantic. In New England the Puritans had not been immediately touched by the Restoration. They had never leaned upon Cromwell for support but had always preserved a sturdy independence. They were too distant to feel the malign influences of the court or to suffer from the persecuting acts — and they had full control of the states which they had founded. Yet there is nevertheless

a distinct decline in force among the New England Puritans during the period of the Restoration. The tone adopted toward Charles II. is very different from that employed with his father in the days when these flourishing colonies were feeble settlements. In Massachusetts under the guidance of some of the old leaders the attempts of Charles to gain control were successfully and daringly defeated in the spirit of an earlier day, but at the same time a class of men was growing up even there in the midst of the most untainted Puritanism who were ready to betray their country to James and take advantage of the timidity which was spreading through the whole people. The condition of New England makes it manifest that the decline of the Puritans in power and energy was due to general and far-reaching causes.

The brief period of faction and turbulence which intervened between the Protectorate and the Restoration is no explanation. The state of the Puritan party under Charles, both in Old and New England, must find its causes much farther back and deeper down than in the weak government of Richard Cromwell, or the insurrections of Lambert and the Fifth-Monarchy men. The death of one man sufficed apparently to break the power of the Puritan party forever, and that fact in itself shows that the party as such must have been really ruined long before. The Puritans were the greatest political party England has ever produced, and they fell more suddenly, and completely, than any other party that ever existed. Once down,

they never rose again. To find the true explanation of this, it is necessary to go back to the meeting of the Long Parliament. When that famous body assembled the people were groaning under all sorts of oppression. The attempt to convert the government of England into an absolute monarchy had failed, and the country party moved from one reform to another, with the irresistible force of the national will behind them. Hyde and Falkland united with Pym and Hampden in the redress of grievances. Then came a further step, — the Grand Remonstrance; and after a heated contest, in which swords were drawn in the House of Commons, the Puritans prevailed, and the Long Parliament was divided into two parties. Hyde and Falkland and the moderate royalists parted company with the leaders of the country party. Then was the critical moment. It was possible to go on from the point which had been reached harmoniously and peacefully, and by the slow but sure processes of political and constitutional growth. On the other hand, it was within the power of either party to take extreme measures, which would breed retaliation and change reform to revolution. If Charles I. had frankly and honestly accepted the situation; if he had formed his ministry of Hyde and Falkland and some of the more moderate Puritans and then acted in good faith, the great rebellion would never have been fought. But it was not in Charles, whose most conspicuous quality was falsehood, to behave honestly to any one. He deceived his friends and played into the hands of

his enemies, and war became inevitable. Even during the civil war the course of events might have been arrested, but at every point Charles's character stood in the way and was an insuperable obstacle. If a revolution is once started, it is very easy to push it from one extreme to another, until it has gone so far that retreat, or even a halt, is impossible; and the character of one man, if that man happens to be a king, is sufficient to exercise a controlling influence. So it was with Charles I. He persisted in extreme measures and in trickery and fraud, until he was brought to the block, and the last links which bound people to the past were hopelessly severed. A large body of men had been forced into a position from which they could not retreat and which they could not hold. They were obliged to advance and so the inevitable process went on, — reform, revolution, extreme measures, the separation from the moderate royalists, the separation from the Presbyterians and moderate Puritans, unsettled government, faction, turbulence, a wild demand for order, and at last the savior of society at the head of the army. Then came the efforts of the party of order, a small party of extreme men, who were the strongest and most determined of their time, to bring the nation over to their side, and to make the system which they had set up acceptable to all. The story of Cromwell's failures in this direction is familiar; yet if he could have had twenty years more of life, if he had been dealing with a different race, he might have succeeded. As it was, he transmitted his power undi-

minished. Richard Cromwell was proclaimed everywhere in England and in the colonies, and was accepted without a murmur; but the sceptre had fallen into nerveless hands before the new order of things was fairly established, and the work of the great Protector was undone. The country relapsed at once into the period of faction and turbulence from which it had begun to emerge. Again the irresistible cry for order and for a savior of society was heard, but there was no Cromwell to respond. There was the army as before, but its leader was Monk. Two paths to order are open after revolution has reached the stage of chaos: one is through despotism, through the rule of the strong leader generated by the times; the other is through reaction and a return to the old system. England had tried the first, and failed. The second was then alone possible; and Monk, at the head of the Puritan army, restored Charles. At first matters moved slowly, but with a constantly accelerating pace until after Charles had actually landed, and then the reaction swept over the whole land. There was a new party of order, and this time they had the nation with them.

We have already glanced at the wretched period that followed. Meanness, tyranny, immorality, — all these the country bore with in patience for the sake of peace; but when defeat by foreign enemies and consequent disgrace ensued, even the overmastering love of order could not stifle the recollection of the glorious period which had departed. Curses were

muttered against the Court, and after the Dutch had been in the Thames Pepys writes: "It is strange how everybody do now-a-days reflect upon Oliver and commend him, what brave things he did, and made all the neighbour princes fear him." They had good reason to reflect upon Oliver; but it was too late, and they were paying the heavy penalty which reaction and restoration always bring to those who fail to snatch from revolution the opportunities it gives, which are so little understood at the moment, and pass away so rapidly and irrevocably. There was no use in sighing for Oliver. The great party which had placed him over its armies had gone to pieces, by its own excesses and quarrels, before he obtained supreme control. The Protectorate was the end of the Puritan party, and unless Cromwell could have developed a new order the old order was bound to come back, and if it did there was no Puritan party to confront it. The Puritan movement culminated in the civil war. It had done its work, and unless it could develop a new, moderate, and yet vigorous system, it was sure to perish under adversity. The intensity of the Long Parliament and the rebellion was self-limited, and something had to be found to take its place. The Puritans could not keep up the movement which had borne them to power, and they failed to find a substitute. In New England they put their theories into practical operation and tried their experiment fully, and yet even there Puritanism sank after the death of Cromwell, more slowly it is true, but just as surely as

it did in England beneath the poisonous influence of Charles, the oppression of the cavalier Parliament, and the heavy hand of James.

But because Puritanism failed to establish a new system, because the Puritan party was wrecked, it is of course a grievous mistake to suppose that their work and their existence had been failures. They had cut loose from the past irrevocably. No reaction could put Charles II. in the place occupied by his father. The Puritans had fought the great rebellion and opened a new era in English history, and the work they had performed made the revolution which overthrew James a certainty and a necessity. To them England owes the constitutional monarchy, which might have come under Charles I. without bloodshed, and which did come under William III., after two civil wars. They left an impress upon the constitution, and upon society, politics, and popular thought which centuries have not been able to efface. But all this they did not see and could not know. They sank under the Restoration, broken, dispirited, oppressed. Yet in the midst of ruin and defeat, when it was despised and rejected of men, the genius of Puritanism rose strong and clear, and John Milton gave to the world his immortal epic, — a last victory and a fit close to the career of a party which had wrought such wonderful works and which had shaped the destiny of nations.

A PURITAN PEPYS.

THERE are two kinds of history — one written by historians and antiquarians, the other by the poet, the dramatist, or the novelist. The latter seize the spirit and the essential truth of the past age and often present it, if not so accurately, more impressively and with more realistic force than any one else. Who can doubt that the kings and queens, the lords and commons of England thought and acted and appeared as Shakespeare says they did? It is a constant source of surprise not to find the speeches which the poet has put into their mouths recorded in the national archives, and duly confirmed by unimpeachable contemporary documents. So, in New England, the history with which we are most familiar is that according to Nathaniel Hawthorne. Now dark and sombre, now warm and full of sunlight, always picturesque and imaginative, the story of the past, disconnected and uncertain, but yet vivid and real, has been woven by the hand of the enchanter to charm and fascinate all who listen. In Hawthorne's pages the ancient Puritan society, austere and rigid, and the later colonial aristocracy, laced and powdered, live and move, a delight to the present generation. But over all alike, over grave and gay, over the forbidding and the at-

tractive, the delicate and morbid genius of the novelist has cast an air of mystery. In these stories we live in an atmosphere of half-told secrets, which are withal so real that we cannot help believing that somewhere, in some musty records or in letters yellow with time, we shall find answers to the questionings with which they fill our minds. Surely there must have been some one who had peeped beneath the black veil, who had known Maule and the Pyncheons, who had seen the prophetic pictures, who could tell us what the little world of Boston said about Hester Prynne and little Pearl, about Arthur Dimmesdale and Roger Chillingworth. One cannot help looking on every page of New England history for the characters of Hawthorne, and for an explanation of their lives. Disappointment always ensues, but hope is revived with each old manuscript that finds its way into print. This is especially the case with the Sewall diary,[1] the publication of which has at last been completed by the Massachusetts Historical Society and which constitutes the most important work of original authority in the whole range of New England history. Its existence has long been known, and historians have occasionally drawn upon its stores for evidence of isolated facts. But for the most part, even those who knew anything about it were only aware that it covered a long period in New England history, was written by a man of social and political eminence, and was rich

[1] *The Sewall Diary.* Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society, Fifth Series, vols. v., vi., and vii.

in details of daily life and personal experience. This long record of more than half a century covers a large part of the history of Massachusetts prior to the Revolution. The period embraced in the diary was, at first, one of great political change, and afterwards of profound repose; and it is to this time that most of the traditions and doubtful stories of early New England belong. The last, the most important, and the most personal of all the historical documents of the time, the Sewall diary, has gradually drawn to itself the mystery and secrecy which Hawthorne imparted to the early history of Massachusetts. In a work so extensive, so minute, so long hidden from the public eye, it seemed as if the curiosity awakened by the great story-teller must be satisfied. One could not help feeling that in this very journal, perhaps, Hawthorne discovered strange traditions and dark suggestions, and found, in the exact description of the unimaginative diarist, models for his own wonderful pictures of the past. Such a fancy unfortunately fades away as we read the printed pages. Hawthorne had no "authorities," and we are fain to be content with the belief that he was not able to solve his own riddles. We open the handsome and carefully edited volumes and drop at once into the region of fact. Yet there is one great question which the diary can answer. From the multitudinous minutes of the worthy judge, we are able to extract material for a tolerably accurate picture of the men and the society depicted by the genius of Hawthorne.

Henry Sewall, grandson to one of the same name who was Mayor of Coventry in Elizabeth's time, came to Massachusetts in the first Puritan emigration, married there and returned to England, where, in 1652, his son Samuel, the author of the diary, was born. In 1661 Samuel Sewall returned to New England with his mother, and in 1668 entered Harvard College, where he graduated in due course in 1671. The Sewall family belonged to that important class of land-holding Puritan gentry which furnished leaders for the famous "country party," and which numbered among its representatives Oliver Cromwell and John Hampden. The Sewalls were evidently people of consideration, and owned estates in England, to the disposition of which the diarist makes frequent allusions.

I have called Samuel Sewall "A Puritan Pepys," and the description is by no means so fanciful as might be supposed. From the fact that they were in a measure contemporary, a comparison of the two diarists is obvious, but the first impression is of the strange contrast between them rather than of any similarity. Pepys was twenty years older than Sewall, and his diary ceases nearly six years before that of the latter begins. Pepys lived in London, the great metropolis of a great nation. He was a gay man of the world and also a man of affairs, an active politician, an office-holder, a member of Parliament, and a courtier. He was a constant attendant at the play, went assiduously into the fashionable world, delighted to note the appearance of the King's many

mistresses, was versed in all the current scandal, loved the other sex not wisely but too well, and was, in short, a man about town in a licentious society and frivolous age. At the same time, Pepys played his part on a greater stage. He was a somewhat conspicuous figure in the history of England at an important period. He was connected with weighty affairs of state, and prospered by the favor and suffered from the enmity of kings. Our Massachusetts diarist, on the other hand, lived in a small town in a remote colony. He had no amusements, even had he desired them, and passed his life in the cares of business and of religion. An active public man, the affairs with which he was constantly engaged rarely rose to more than local interest; the society in which he moved was rigid and austere, and the monotony of existence must have been intense.

Yet, after all, between the gay politician of the Restoration and the grave Puritan judge there is a marked and interesting likeness. Possibly certain fixed qualities of mind and character must be common to all good diarists, but, however this may be, if Pepys had been brought up as a Puritan and lived in New England, one cannot help thinking that he would have been much like Sewall.

Beneath the superficial differences we can find the deep resemblances. Pepys, in an irreligious and debauched society, was a good churchman and punctual in the performance of his religious duty; and religion, although of a widely different type, was, of course,

the engrossing thought of Sewall. Both were fond of gossip, good observers, patient, industrious, and of moderate dispositions. Pepys had a strong sense of what was right, but the worldly side was uppermost always. The religious element preponderated with Sewall, but he too had a keen sense of worldly advantages which crops out constantly and in a most incongruous fashion. Pepys, as I have said, was fond of the other sex, and the animal instincts in his nature were checked only by his extreme prudence. It is curious to observe the same cautious disposition in Sewall, which, taken with the overpowering religious influence, would seem sufficient to have extinguished all grosser passions. Yet the sensual qualities were only repressed. They break out strangely now and then through the iron bonds of Puritanism, and especially in the courtships of the more than middle-aged man after the death of his first wife. They were both also good public servants, upright and faithful, they had strong literary tastes, and each in his way was a scholar, student, and lover of books.

But wholly apart from historical considerations, it is the strong personal quality which has made Pepys the most amusing and enduring of diarists. We read in his pages the whole history of a human heart. Nothing about himself is too trifling to be noticed, and this is the very thing which makes the book a delight and gives it the immortality which all true pictures of human nature obtain. To write a diary of this sort requires frank vanity and perfect honesty. These es-

sential qualities Pepys and Sewall have in common, and therefore they are profoundly similar. Neither ever tired of talking about his own affairs, and while he depicts the life about him, draws a still more vivid picture of himself. There is more, much more, of general value, of course, in Pepys than in Sewall; but after throwing aside from the latter the mass of trivialities which are necessarily recorded, we find in him, as in his English contemporary, a similar tale of human experience which, well and frankly told, must always have an undying and universal interest.

In one important respect Sewall has been more fortunate than Pepys, who has suffered grievous things from his translators and editors. To publish an expurgated edition of the latter was very well perhaps, but to go deliberately to work and print a second edition fuller and more elaborate than the first, and yet not complete, was stupid in the highest degree. Pepys is not intended for Sunday-schools, but he is a great historical authority. The most honest of writers, both he and his public are entitled to an absolutely perfect transcript of his diary, and those who are too delicate to read it can buy a modified version. Unluckily the last expurgator has probably prevented a complete edition for many years to come. Sewall, on the contrary, has been blessed with honest as well as learned editors. Only one trifling passage has been suppressed, and the whole story is before us to do with and judge of as we list.

The diary begins in 1674. At that time Massachu-

setts was still under the independent government framed by the founders. She was still the free Puritan Commonwealth conducted according to the Puritan theory of an indivisible church and state, where the test of citizenship was godliness. Scarcely ten years had elapsed since her bold and sagacious magistrates had driven the meddling commissioners of the King of England from her borders. But time and delay, which had worked with Massachusetts against Charles I., and finally gave her victory, had a precisely opposite result in the contest with Charles II. The scourge of Indian hostility had fallen upon the Commonwealth and was draining her resources. Philip's war broke out in 1675, and Sewall records many massacres and surprises, "lamentable fights and formidable engagements," and notes in a matter-of-fact way repeated executions of Indian prisoners on Boston Common. The Puritans were slow to anger, but when aroused by Indian atrocities they waged war upon the savages with the persistence, the merciless thoroughness, and the calm determination which was peculiar to their race and creed. Samuel Sewall was a man of gentle and peaceable nature, but he writes in 1676, "As to our enemies, God hath in a great measure given us to see our desire on them. Most ringleaders in the late massacre have themselves had blood to drink, ending their lives by bullets and halters." After making due allowance for the phrase of an elder day, there still remains a certain fierceness in this expression, and yet it would be unjust to attribute it to a mere spirit of

vindictive exaltation. The words are typical of the men. Their enemies were God's enemies, and they were themselves the chosen instruments of Divine vengeance. Such words from such a man show the stern character which rendered the Puritans invincible and which, in the performance of duty, made them ready to march through slaughter even to the throne.

But besides the exhaustion produced by this war, other causes were at work in Massachusetts which destroyed her independence and brought the great Puritan experiment to ruin. Wealth had increased, and a timid, conservative class had grown up who were not ready, like their ancestors, to take to the woods rather than submit to the Stuart. A liberal but at the same time debilitating spirit was creeping into the church, as was shown by the failing strength of the once all-powerful clergy. The systems of church and state were breaking down together. The former made a more prolonged struggle than the latter to maintain itself, as was apparent in the witchcraft excitement, and in the desperate effort to retain control of the college. But all was in vain, and while it was thus weakened at home the cause of the New England Puritan was hopeless abroad. There was no longer a great party in sympathy with them in the mother country and master of the government. Their friends in England were beaten, broken, and dispirited, and their own success in settling the new country drew upon them the attention of the ministry. In 1674 Randolph was already at work, and the train

was laid which in a few years shattered the beloved charter government. Conservatism and timidity soon changed under the influence of external power into division and discord, and the people of Massachusetts no longer presented a united front to the royal power. A set of men became prominent who were trusted by the people, and were ready to betray them and become the servants of England. To this new party of prerogative and submission the government of Massachusetts was committed after the dissolution of the charter. Then followed the stupid and oppressive policy of James II., the revolt against Andros, and the apparent recovery of the old liberties. But the appearance was deceptive. The spell was broken, the Puritan Commonwealth, as it had been designed by its founders, perished with the charter and could not be revived. After a few faint efforts, Massachusetts relapsed into the commonplace and fairly liberal provincial government accorded her by William of Orange.

Sewall's diary begins when the government of the founders still prevailed, and was in seeming as strong and vigorous as ever. It comes down through the succeeding years of rapid transition, and ends when the provincial system had been long established. The colonial period is dark and forbidding, though not without a gloomy picturesqueness, and is elevated and honored by the high aims and great objects of its actors. But it is stern and cold like the New England winter, and we turn from it with a certain feeling of relief to the baser provincial period of petty interests and

material wealth. If the former resembles New England's winter, the latter suggests its summer. There is warmth and light and the repose of a summer's day about the provincial times. There were no great questions then and no great struggles, only a complete and unambitious quiet. We think of the people at that time as living in romantic old houses with seven gables, and basking in the sunshine at their doors and in their pleasant gardens, their sole interests being the affairs of the peaceful villages, to which the confused noises of the great world came only in distant murmurs. The historical and social temperature of Sewall's diary varies, therefore, considerably. The first volume, beginning in the colonial period, covers the loss of the charter, the rapid changes which followed, and concludes with the establishment of the new system. The two last volumes give the most perfect picture that we possess of Massachusetts under the provincial government, opening in the reign of William III. and closing some years after the accession of George II. Politically, therefore, the first volume possesses a greater interest than either of its successors. But its chief value in this respect is in the knowledge we obtain of the character of the writer, because we there find the clew to the unsuccessful and feeble resistance offered by Massachusetts to the second attack upon her charter. Sewall was a representative of the most devout English Puritans, but he was of a submissive, not an aggressive temper. He was honestly attached to the old church and state government

of the early settlers. His political and religious principles were thoroughly Puritan, and he had an almost morbid dislike of innovations of all sorts. He became at an early period a deputy and then a magistrate under the old charter government, and he sadly records the events which led to its destruction. But it seems never to have occurred to him to oppose a vigorous resistance to the encroachments of the royal power. He bowed before the storm, accepted the loss of the charter as inevitable, mourned in silence the death of the old system, and took office under the new governments that followed in rapid succession. He was not one of the small minority who would have resisted to the bitter end, still less did he belong to the party of the crown. He represented the great intermediate body of the people, whose action was decisive, and who, while they clung affectionately to the traditions of their fathers, were not ready to oppose any effectual resistance to the ministerial policy. The character and behavior of Sewall and men like him were the prevailing cause of the overthrow of the charter government. It was to such men that the success of the crown and of Joseph Dudley and his faction must be wholly attributed. But it is not proper on this account to censure Sewall and the mass of the New England people who thought as he did. Times had changed, and men are to a great extent the creatures of the period in which they live. The terrible spirit which carried the Puritan armies in triumph from the field of Marston Moor to the "crowning mercy" at Worcester had

passed away in England, and Oliver Cromwell had been succeeded by the most contemptible of the Stuarts. In a similar fashion the spirit which had rent St. George's cross from the flag because it was an emblem of idolatry, and which had nerved a new and feeble colony to do battle with England, was nearly extinct in Massachusetts. The great movement of the seventeenth century had spent its force. Prosperity and material well-being, the acquisition of property, the establishment of society, and radical changes at home and abroad had done their work. The stern and daring fathers were succeeded by gentler and more timid sons. The Puritan experiment was doomed, and in every entry of Sewall's diary, in every feature of his character, we see the causes of the fall of the Puritan Commonwealth, of the elevation of Dudley, and of the subsequent successful establishment of a dependent provincial government.

But as has already been said, this journal acquires its deepest interest from the picture of a past society, and of forgotten manners and modes of thought which it presents. Sewall had been nearly three years out of college when he began his diary. He was still, however, a resident fellow attached to the college, and performed various duties, for which he was duly remunerated. His principal business was to be "commonplaced," or, in other words, to deliver religious discourses to the students, a task in the highest degree congenial to him, especially as he then contemplated becoming a minister.

The following entry gives a good idea of the nature of college offenses, and the methods of discipline in vogue in 1674, when Sewall began his diary, and had not yet ventured out into the world: —

"Thomas Sargeant was examined by the Corporation. Finally, the advice of Mr. Danforth, Mr. Stoughton, Mr. Thatcher, Mr. Mather (then present) was taken. This was his sentence: 'That being convicted of speaking blasphemous words concerning the H. G. he should be therefore publickly whipped before all the Scholars. 2. That he should be suspended as to taking his degree of Bachelour (this sentence read before him twice at the Prts. before the committee, and in the library I up before execution.) 3. Sit alone by himself in the Hall uncovered at meals, during the pleasure of the President and Fellows, and be in all things obedient, doing what exercises as appointed him by the President, or else be finally expelled the Colledge. The first was presently put in execution in the Library (Mr. Danforth, Jr., being present) before the Scholars. He kneeled down, and the instrument Goodman Hely attended the President's word as to the performance of his part in the work. Prayer was had before and after by the President.'"

The ludicrous contrast between the "Colledge" of 1674 and the great University of the present day is obvious enough, and constitutes perhaps the chief interest of the passage. But if we look a little more closely, we find that this apparently trivial entry ex-

hibits the great characteristic which marked English Puritanism in the Old World and the New, and which divides it by an impassable barrier from our modern life. This is the religious element. The offense was one against religion, and both before and after the boy was birched prayer was offered, and inspiration sought. Thus it is throughout the diary, and the religious tone gives to the whole book its principal psychological and historic interest. The fact that the great tide of religious feeling which had swept over England had now begun to ebb, is in itself an advantage to the student of Puritan doctrines and spiritual thought. The fierce, proselyting, fanatic spirit which had raged like a tornado, and had laid government and churches prostrate, was no more. The sword had fallen from the hand of the Puritan, the aggressive qualities of his belief had passed away, and only the faith itself remained. War, conquest, the extirpation of the enemies of the Lord and the stern exercise of power went hand in hand with the religion of Cromwell and his soldiers; but all these terrible and absorbing interests died with the great Protector. The Puritan of 1675 was occupied only by the religious faith of the Puritan of 1650; and, divested of outside and exciting influences, the religion of the Puritans can be much better understood and appreciated. This was particularly true of New England, where the reaction produced by the Restoration had not yet made itself felt. Religious Puritanism existed in Massachusetts in full force at the close of the seventeenth century, although

the Puritanism of the soldier and the politician had departed. It is true the religious fervor also was beginning to decline, but as the fabric goes to pieces we are enabled to analyze the material with which it had been built up. Judge Sewall himself was, moreover, an admirable exponent of the Puritan character at this period. Fortunately for our purpose he was not a minister, but he was a more than commonly devout, earnest, and conscientious layman in a deeply religious community. The workings of his mind are therefore most interesting, and as he notes with sorrow the gradual decay of religious observances, and clutches desperately at principles and practices which were fast falling into disuse, the minutest details of the Puritan system pass before our eyes, and the whole structure of their religion and their course of thought are exposed.

It is hardly necessary to say that such religious faith no longer exists. There is now plenty of honest and liberal Christianity, of mild-eyed devotion, of enfeebling superstition, but the religion of Puritan Englishmen is entirely gone. We have nothing like it; we can find no present parallel; we can with difficulty form an accurate conception of what it was. To the Puritan, religion was a stern, terrible, and ever-present reality, a great moving force. It was never absent from his mind. It inspired his loftiest actions, and sanctified the greatest events; yet at the same time no incident of daily life was so mean or trivial as not to suggest holy thoughts and lead to

communion with God. On the bleak and thinly settled shores of New England, religion was the source of every joy, and offered the only intellectual excitement which the people either knew or desired. Yet they were withal eminently practical men. They were not slothful in business, because they were fervent in spirit. Persistence, work, success, prosperity, material well-being, and social respectability their religion taught them to regard as among the highest duties and most valuable possessions. Thus they triumphed over natural difficulties, as they had prevailed over armies, while in every circumstance and relation of life, religion pervaded all thought and action. It was a harsh and gloomy, perhaps a repulsive faith, but vigorous, real, and uncompromising to a degree which the world now can hardly imagine.

Sewall had a strong desire to be a minister, and such was for some years after leaving college his intention. He studied with that view and even essayed to preach. "April 4, Sab. day. I help preach for my master (Mr. Parker) in the afternoon. Being afraid to look on the glass, ignorantly and unwillingly I stood two hours and a half." Want of matter certainly could not have been Sewall's failing, but for some unexplained reason he finally abandoned his purpose, though he always retained some of the habits contracted at this time. Many volumes of notes from the sermons which he heard still exist. He was very fond of theological discussions, of turning dreams into parables and of moralizing upon every conceivable topic,

and he was also the author of a learned work, bearing the appalling title of "*Phenomena Apocalyptica.*" During the period of indecision which preceded his choice of a profession, Sewall was in a state of deep religious distress and doubt. November 11, 1675, he writes: "Morning proper fair; the weather exceeding benign, but (to me) metaphoric, dismal, dark and portentous, some prodegie appearing in every corner of the skies." This condition of mind endured for some years, for even as late as 1677 he wrote that he was under "great exercise of mind with regard to his spiritual estate." It finally wore off, however, and he settled down into merely an unusually religious layman. There was a passing struggle on the question of his joining the Old South Church, but with that exception this phase of religious uncertainty never returned. The most curious and interesting feature of the book, and one which is perfectly unvarying, is the religious thought and expression called forth by every trifling event. Examples might be multiplied, but a few will suffice to show a habit of mind which is now as utterly extinct as the mastodon or the icthyosaurus.

"Jan. 13, 1676–7. Giving my chickens meat, it came to my mind that I gave them nothing save Indian corn and water, and yet they eat it and thrived very well, and that that food was necessary for them, how mean soever, which much affected me and convinced what need I stood in of spiritual food, and that I should not nauseate daily duties of Prayer, &c.

"* * * * Just before I went, Brother Longfel-

low came in, which was some exercise to me, he being so ill conditioned and so outwardly shabby. The Lord humble me. As I remember, he came so before; either upon the funeral of my Father or Johny."

The connection of ideas in the following passage, however, is as remarkable as any in the diary. A stranger text than baked pigeons could not readily be found, and the "wisdom of the serpent" can only be referred to his own shift to get a dinner.

"July 25, 1699. When I came home Sam, Hanah and Joana being gon to Dorchester with Madam Usher to the Lecture, I found the House empty and Lock'd. Taking the key I came in and made a shift to find a solitary diner of bak'd Pigeons and a piece of Cake. How hapy I were, if I could once become wise as a Serpent and harmless as a Dove!"

Anything physical was sure to be given a spiritual application. We find an example of this habit in the following entry: —

"Dec. 30. 1702. I was weighed in Col. Byfield's scales: weight one hundred one half one quarter wanting 3 pounds i. e. 193 pounds Net. Col. Byfield weighed sixty three pounds more than I: had only my close coat on. The Lord add, or take away from this our corporeal weight, so as shall be most advantagious for our Spiritual growth."

A few years later Sewall was the victim of a robbery, and both his narration of the incident and the impression it made upon him are highly characteristic.

"Lord's Day, June 15th, 1707. I felt myself dull

and heavy and listless as to Spiritual Good; Carnal, Lifeless; I sigh'd to God, that he would quicken me."

"June 16. My House was broken open in two places and about Twenty pounds worth of plate Stolen away and some linen: My Spoon, and knife, and Neckcloth was taken: I said, Is not this an answer of Prayer? Jane came up, and gave us the Alarm betime in the morn. I was helped to submit to Christ's stroke, and Say, Wellcome CHRIST."

June 19th the "measuring bason" was recovered, and the receiver, a woman, was taken and put in prison. Two days later a shop was entered and the thief, who had also robbed Sewall, was captured, whereupon the diary says: "At night I read out of Caryl on Job, 5. 2. The humble submission to the *Stroke* of God, turns in to a *Kiss* — which I thank God, I have in this instance experienced. *Laus Deo.*" There is no indication that he recovered his property, and we are forced to conclude that the "*Kiss* of God" in this instance was the prompt capture and imprisonment of both thief and receiver.

Some years afterwards his daughter Hannah, who not long before had sustained a painful fall, fell again and injured herself still more severely. Sewall thus narrates the occurrence, under date of "Satterday, July 2. When I got home was grievously surpris'd to find Hañah fallen down the stairs again, the Rotula of he Left Knee broken, as the other was; and a great Gash cut across he Right Legg just below the

Knee which were fain to stitch. Much blood issued out. The Lord Sanctify this Smarting Rod to me, and mine! This cloud returning after the Rain! Broke her Right Knee-pan the fifth of August, 1714."

This constant moralizing upon the most trivial as well as the gravest events, and this unceasing flow of religious thought, bore with peculiar severity upon the children of the community. The utter grimness of the thorough English Puritanism comes out with full force in such a passage as the following: —

"Sabbath, Jan. 12. Richard Dumer, a flourishing youth of 9 years, dies of the Small Pocks. I tell Sam. of it and what need he had to prepare for Death, and therefore to endeavour really to pray when he said over the Lord's Prayer: He seem'd not much to mind, eating an Aple; but when he came to say, Our father, he burst out into a bitter Cry, and when I askt what was the matter, and he could speak, he burst into a bitter Cry, and said he was afraid he should die. I pray'd with him, and read Scriptures comforting against death, as O death where is thy sting, &c. All things yours. Life and Immortality brought to light by Christ, &c. 'Twas at noon."

Having frightened his boy most terribly, by convincing him of the near prospect of death, Sewall's only idea of comforting and restoring the child was to read a selection of very grand and very solemn texts. This conduct, however, was quite in keeping with the literature provided for children. The Reverend Michael Wigglesworth, a distinguished divine in early

New England, was also a poet, if we may so term the author of a vast quantity of harsh, unmusical, and dreary verse. His most valued and popular production was entitled "The Day of Doom," which was repeatedly published in convenient form for the especial use and behoof of the children of the community. One stanza, describing the fate of sinners, will sufficiently characterize the mental food prepared for the young people of New England at the beginning of the eighteenth century: —

> "Die fain they would, if die they could,
> But death will not be had;
> God's direful wrath their bodies hath
> Forever immortal made.
> They live to lie in misery
> And bear eternal woe;
> And live they must whilst God is just,
> That he may plague them so."

Nothing is more striking, in a statistical point of view, than the enormous infant mortality of early New England. Nature enforced in the most rigid way the system of selection, and the extremely tough fibre of the New England people is undoubtedly due to this unrelenting application of the principle of the survival of the fittest. When one finds such literature as the "Day of Doom" particularly reserved for the children, it is impossible to avoid the thought that the mental gloom of Puritan childhood must have efficiently aided the climate and the inevitable exposure in destroying all the feeble offspring of this stern and hardy race.

The natural vigor of body and mind must have indeed been great in order to withstand such a combination of adverse influences in the tender years of childhood. In fact Sewall himself, despite great affection, seems to have regarded his offspring chiefly as conspicuous and instructive examples of original sin, as we may see by this entry: —

"Nov. 6. Joseph threw a knop of Brass and hit his Sister Betty on the forhead so as to make it bleed and swell; upon which, and for his playing at Prayer-time, and eating when Return Thanks, I whipd him pretty smartly. When I first went in (call'd by his Grandmother) he sought to shadow and hide himself from me behind the head of the Cradle; which gave me the sorrowfull remembrance of Adam's carriage."

As in the petty incidents of domestic affairs, so it was in the graver events of both public and private life. In all alike there is the same ever-present thought of communion with God and of learning to serve Him, and draw spiritual instruction from everything that befell either the individual or the state. In cases of sickness or death a private fast was held, and the relatives and intimate friends gathered in the afflicted house to pray. If doubts and darkness enveloped the course of public affairs the whole community met together to fast and pray, and listen to the exhortations of the ministers, and when the hand of power began to weigh upon New England, Sewall prayed not merely that oppression might be lightened but that this trial might be sanctified to them, and that

they might gather from it the teaching of the Almighty. It was also the custom among the more devout if not among all classes, to set apart certain days for private fasting and prayer, without reference to any particular event. This was Sewall's habit, and there are constant allusions to setting aside a day and shutting himself up in his house for prayer and religious meditation. In the following curious passage we get a glimpse of the variety and extent of Puritan prayer, and also of the touch of superstition in their character which is likewise so marked in the attention paid to dreams throughout the diary.

"Feb. 21, 1702. Capt. Tim°. Clark tells me that a line drawn to the Comet strikes just upon Mexico, spake of a Revolution there, how great a thing it would be. Said one Whitehead told him of the magnificence of the City, that there were in it 1500 Coaches drawn with Mules. This Blaze had put me much in mind of Mexico; because we must look toward Mexico to view it. Capt. Clark drew a line on his Globe. Our thoughts being thus confer'd, and found to jump, makes it to me remarkable. I have long pray'd for Mexico, and of late in those words, that God would open the Mexican Fountain."

At a later period Sewall, instead of contenting himself with his usual bare mention, gives a full account of one of these days of prayer which is well worth quotation.

"The Apointment of a Judge for the Super. Court being to be made upon next Fifth day, Febr. 12,

I pray'd God to accept me in keeping a privat day of Prayer with Fasting for that and other important matters: I kept it upon the Third day Febr. 10. 170⅞ in the uper Chamber at the North East end of the House, fastening the Shutters next the Street. — Perfect what is lacking in my Faith, and in the faith of my dear Yokefellow. Convert my Children; Especially Samuel and Hañah; Provide rest and settlement for Hañah; Recover Mary, Save Judith, Elisabeth and Joseph: Requite the labour of love of my kinswoman Jane Tappin, Give her health, find out Rest for her. Make David a man after thy own heart, Let Susan live and be baptised with the Holy Ghost and with fire. Relations. Steer the Government in this difficult time, when the Governour and many others are at so much Variance: Direct, incline, overrule on the Council-day fifth-day Feb. 12. as to the Special Work of it in filling the Super. Court with Justices; or any other thing of like nature; as Pli'm° infer. Court.[1] Bless the Company for the propagation of the Gospel, Especiall Gov^r Ashurst &c. Revive the Business of Religion at Natick, and accept and bless John Neesnumin[2] who went thither last week for that end. Mr. Rawson at Nantucket. Bless the South Church in preserving and Spiriting our Pastor; in directing unto suitable Supply, and making the Church unanimous: Save the Town, College; Province from Invasion of Enemies, open, Secret and from false

[1] Inferior Court of Plymouth.

[2] Converted Indian and preacher.

Brethren: Defend the Purity of Worship. Save Connecticut, bless their new Governour: Save the Reformation under N. York Government. Reform all the European Plantations in America; Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, Dutch; Save this New World, that where Sin hath abounded, Grace may Superabound; that CHRIST who is stronger, would bind the Strong man and spoil his house; and order the Word to be given, Babylon is fallen. — Save our Queen, lengthen out her Life and Reign. Save France, make the Proud helper stoop [Job ix. 13]. Save all Europe; Save Asia, Africa, Europe and America. These were gen'l heads of my Meditation and prayer; and through the bounteous Grace of GOD, I had a very comfortable day of it."

Nothing gives a more vivid idea of the intensity of the Puritan faith than this prayer. Such a practice was a form of devotional exercise which indeed followed strictly the injunction of praying and fasting in secret. No one outside the family knew of this act of devotion so often repeated, and only a chance entry in a diary, never intended for publication, has revealed it to us. There was of course abundance of public praying in the family circle and in the church, and it was the universal custom to "put up notes," sometimes in one church, sometimes in all, asking the prayers of the congregations for any person or family oppressed with sorrow or repentance or threatened with heavy affliction. The ordinary amount of religious exercises was something enormous according to modern notions,

but yet it did not suffice, and hence these days of solitary meditation and worship. The wide range of subjects is the most striking feature of the practice, and it is this quality which is so highly characteristic and instructive. The spiritual welfare of the individual occupied but a comparatively small part of the day set apart for a private fast. Every topic of interest personal and public, the thousand and one purely temporal matters which to-day are discussed in the newspapers or around the dinner-table, the affairs of the state and of foreign nations, all alike meet with due attention in the prayer of the Puritan. Nothing was too trifling to be brought to the throne of heavenly grace. It shows in the most vivid way the all-absorbing and pervading character of the religion of the Puritans, and their immovable belief that they were a chosen people whose first duty was to be in constant communion with an ever-present God. There is a grand reality about such a faith when we can tear aside the veil and see it in the closet in all its sincerity, unaffected by the surroundings inseparable from the synagogue or the corners of the street.

Secrecy, however, was in itself very far from being a typical quality of the Puritans. One of the most marked features of their character and belief is their love of publicity in matters of religion and morality. Charles I., in the hands of the saints at Hampton Court, dreaded the knife or poison of the assassin, and nothing shows more clearly his helpless ignorance of the men with whom he had to deal. When they had

once determined that their king was a criminal, they esteemed it their duty that he should expiate his crime in open day, before God and the people. In the same spirit the condemned malefactors in Boston were brought into church and made the subject of discourse from the pulpit. "Thursday, March 11, 1685," Sewall says, "Persons crowd much into the old Meeting-House by reason of James Morgan," a condemned murderer who was "turned off" about half an hour past five the same day. "Mr. Cotton Mather accompanied James Morgan to the place of execution and prayed with him there," after having used him as a text in the morning. This practice is especially noted, and was conducted with much circumstance and pomp in the cases of various pirates belonging to the bands which at that period infested the coast of North America, and who were captured in New England from time to time. In 1704 some of these notorious and dreaded ruffians landed on Cape Ann and were there made prisoners by Salem troops commanded by Sewall's brother. More than twenty were seized on the 9th and 10th of June and were put in prison. The Puritans were no friends to delays of justice, and the pirates were accordingly tried in batches on June 13th, 24th, and 25th. Nearly all were condemned to death, and seven, including the captain, Quelch, were picked out for immediate execution. June 27th, Sewall writes: "In the morning I heard Mr. Cotton Mather pray, preach, catechise excellently the condemned prisoners in the chamber of

the prison." June 30th six were hung, the seventh having been reprieved. The place of the execution was near the river on the flats in full view of the neighboring hills, the most generally visible spot that could have been chosen. Sewall says, "After dinẽr about 3 P. M. I went to see the execution. Many were the people that saw upon Broughton's Hill. But when I came to see how the River was cover'd with People, I was amazed: Some say there were 100 Boats; 150 Boats and canoes, saith Cousin Moody of York. He told them. Mr. Cotton Mather came with Captain Quelch and six others for execution from the Prison to Scarlet's wharf and from thence in the Boat to the place of Execution about the midway between Hanson's Point and Broughton's warehouse. When the scaffold was hoisted to a due height the seven Malefactors went up; Mr. Mather pray'd for them standing upon the Boat. Ropes were all fastened to the gallows (save King who was reprieved). When the scaffold was let to sink, there was such a screech of the Women that my wife heard it, sitting in our Entry next the Orchard and was much surprised at it; yet the wind was sou-west. Our house is a full mile from the place." The "Boston News Letter" of that day says that "notwithstanding all the great labour and pains taken by the Reverend ministers of the Town of Boston the pirates dyed very obdurately and impenitently, hardened in their sin." It is to be hoped, however, that the efforts of the ministers and the publicity of the execution had the edifying effect

upon the people, which was the chief object of the Puritans in all such matters. It was in this way, at all events, both by the preaching and the punishment, that criminals were used to point the moral in person, and were brought before the eyes of the people in visible token of the punishment of evil lives. In a similar manner the Puritan, as I have said, was accustomed to demand the prayers of the congregation, not only in times of affliction but when convinced of sin. The best known act in Judge Sewall's life is his confession of repentance for the part he had taken in the witchcraft persecution. The hand-bill which he posted in the Old South Church, admitting his sin, and desiring the prayers of the congregation, is given in the diary. It was not enough that the change of heart which domestic sorrow had wrought in him should be known to himself and his God. The world must know it too. Whether the Puritans brought a king to execution, led out a murderer to the gallows, or admitted their own past errors, there was no concealment about it. They were not merely ready to justify their conclusions, but they were determined that they should be known and seen of men. In this way alone would truth prevail, and the kingdom of righteousness be established on earth. Whatever the faults of Puritan politics and religion, the dagger of the assassin, the secrets of the confessional, or the casuistry of the Jesuits, found no place among them.

This strong tendency to draw moral lessons from every occurrence, and to attribute every unusual mani-

festation to Divine influence or to the working of the Holy Spirit, was far from blinding them, however, to the existence of more worldly motives. The religious explanation was in their eyes the natural one, but the strong sense and native shrewdness of the English Puritan was rarely so blunted that it failed to understand mundane influences. The following incident, which occurred while Sewall was still a very young man, illustrates this power of discrimination in an amusing way: —

"Saturday Even., Aug. 12, 1676, just as prayer ended Tim. Dwight sank down in a swoun, and for a good space was as if he perceived not what was done to him. After kicked and sprawled, knocking his hands and feet upon the floor like a distracted man, was carried pick-pack to bed by John Alcock, there his cloaths pulled off. In the night it seems he talked of ships, his master, father, and unckle Eliot. The Sabbath following Father went to him, spake to him to know what ailed him, asked if he would be prayed for, and for what he would desire his friends to pray. He answered, for more sight of sin, and God's healing grace. I asked him, being alone with him, whether his troubles were from some outward cause or spiritual. He answered, spiritual. I asked him why then he could not tell it his master, as well as any other, since it is the honour of any man to see sin and be sorry for it. He gave no answer, as I remember. Asked him if he would goe to meeting. He said, 't was in vain for him; his day was out. I asked,

what day: he answered, of Grace. I told him 't was sin for any one to conclude themselves Reprobate, that this was all one. He said he would speak more, but could not, &c. Notwithstanding all this semblance (and much more than is written) of compunction for sin, 't is to be feared that his trouble arose from a maid whom he passionately loved: for that when Mr. Dwight and his master had agreed to let him goe to her, he eftsoons grew well."

"Friday, Aug. 25. I spake to Tim. of this, asked him whether his convictions were off. He answered, no. I told him how dangerous it was to make the convictions wrought by God's spirit a stalking horse to any other thing. Broke off, he being called away by Sam."

The discovery of the unlucky Tim is far less striking than the immediate assumption by all concerned that his difficulties must be of a religious nature, and the half belief of even the culprit himself that his mental agitation was due to religious fervor and not to the ardor of earthly love.

If the utter absorption in religion which these various examples indicate were the whole of the Puritan faith it would offer no object for study, no cause for interest. If this were all, the Puritan would not have crushed mitre and crown together and placed England in the foremost rank of European nations, or laid the foundation of another English empire on the rocky shores of Massachusetts. They would have been only one more example of the fanaticism which sent the

early ascetics to the desert and the later ones to the cloister. But the all-absorbing and ever-present religion of the Puritans did not require the renunciation of the world. It made the affairs of this life secondary, but it did not efface them. In the old forms of belief, in the mediæval church, man passed from the material to the spiritual, until he wholly lost sight of the former. With the Puritan the case was exactly reversed. The spiritual struggle and the succeeding calm came first and left the man at liberty to deal with the material world about him. The Puritan found his consecration to God in doing what he believed was God's service among the men and things of this life. He was not to leave the world and its temptations, but to go out into it to do what seemed right in his own eyes and establish the kingdom of God upon earth. In this way the religion of the Puritans became a great and active force socially and politically, instead of a stifling atmosphere of idle superstition. Thus it was that the Puritans founded states and ruled commonwealths. Thus it was that they produced great statesmen and soldiers and politicians, instead of followers of La Trappe.

The common usage in speaking of the religion of the New England Puritan is to refer to it as "gloomy and repulsive fanaticism," or "narrow and harsh bigotry." Like most popular statements this is superficial and insufficient, but contains, nevertheless, some elements of truth. The religious belief of New England was awful in its sternness. There is in all his-

tory no greater exhibition of the dogged persistence and stubborn courage of the English race than the settlement of Massachusetts. It is true that the colonists believed they were doing God's work, but their doctrines were so terrible that it is a matter of profound astonishment how they had the courage to face their own religious convictions and the terror of the wilderness at the same time. The real explanation, of course, is that to men with such beliefs, mere earthly dangers and trials sank into utter insignificance. Yet it is not easy to conceive how the human heart and mind could have been steeled to bear such a strain. The stories of the early days and of the first landings have become household words, and the struggles with famine and cold and savages in the days of Endicott and Winthrop are familiar to us. Yet it may be doubted whether those first fierce conflicts required more strength than the continuous hardship and grinding discomfort which went on year after year when the colony was first settled. It is true that in those days men were accustomed to far less bodily comfort even in Europe, than at the present time, yet we cannot but wonder at the sturdy endurance which bore, without a murmur, the physical hardships of a New England winter, as we find them detailed by Sewall. Food was often scarce in severe winters, and there was but little variety; communication with the outer world almost ceased; travel was well-nigh impossible, and the means of keeping warm were totally insufficient. One winter Sunday, toward the close of the seven-

teenth century, Sewall notes in his diary that the sacramental bread was frozen, and rattled as it fell upon the plate. More than twenty years later even, in 1716, when the appliances of comfort had greatly increased he writes: "Lord's Day, Jan^{y} 15. An extraordinary cold Storm of wind and Snow. Blows much as coming home at Noon and so holds on. Bread was frozen at the Lord's table; Mr. Pemberton administered. Came not out to afternoon exercise. Though t'was so cold, yet John Tuckerman was baptised. At six a-clock my ink freezes so that I can hardly write by a good fire in my Wive's chamber. Yet was very comfortable at meeting. *Laus Deo.*" What a picture of utter discomfort such an incident as this conveys. This continual suffering from the winter climate, moreover, fell upon all with nearly equal severity. One house was about as warm as another, and wood, the only fuel, was both cheap and plenty. One convincing proof and practical result of this hard existence is the great infant mortality, already alluded to, of which this diary offers abundant evidence and to which the ferocious practice of baptizing new born babes at church, in all weathers, no doubt contributed.

The state, too, called upon all alike to take their share of exposure and suffering in her service. Sewall was soldier as well as lawyer and judge, and although a man of wealth and position, a deputy and a magistrate; he was obliged to take his turn at watch-duty in Boston, and go the rounds of the little town through many a long cold night. Even after he was

sixty years old, when he had long been a member of the Council and of the Supreme Court, of which he became Chief Justice, he still continued to make occasional rounds of the town at night at the head of the constables. He frequently makes note in his diary of these expeditions, and thus describes one which indicates that the Puritan town was rapidly growing and getting some of the evils as well as the advantages of an increased population: —

"Monday, Aug^{t}. 1715. Set out at 11. at night on Horseback with Tho. Wallis to inspect the order of the town [accompanied by six constables]. Dissipated the players at Nine Pins at Mount Whoredom.[1] Benjamin Davis, chairmaker, and Jacob Hasy were two of them. Reproved Thomas Messenger for Entertaining them. As came home between 2 and three took up Peter Griffis, the notorious Burglarer, and comitted him to Prison. Generally the Town was peaceable and in good order."

A magistrate and judge of high position like Sewall was also expected to exercise a general supervision over the morals of the people, and his extensive and vague powers in this respect seem to have been implicitly submitted to. Here is an example: —

On Saturday, July 30, 1715, Sewall attended a funeral in Cambridge, and says: "T'was six a-clock when came out of the Burying place; so I came straight home upon my Gray horse; saw a Rainbow in Charlestown Market Place. Caus'd the Shops to

[1] South and west slopes of Beacon Hill.

be Shut up, as I rode along." This is an instance of the strict maintenance of the Puritan Sabbath, which was held to begin at six o'clock on Saturday. Another similar case, involving the enforcement of the rigid law against Sunday traveling, occurs soon after. The account of this incident, which befell Sewall when on the circuit, is interesting, not only as a picture of manners and customs, but because it is so strongly tinged with the worldly shrewdness which, in the midst of religious considerations, imparts so much humor and interest to the diary, and reveals the writer's character in such a genuine and amusing way: —

"May, 13. (Sunday) In the evening I had an inkling that two merchants Came from Ipswich. I said how Shall I do to avoid Fining them. I examined Richard Gerrish.[1] As I understood him, they lodg'd at Major Epes's on Satterday night and went to the publick worship there; and when the afternoon Exercise was over, came to Newbury. They Travailed not in Service Time: and had a ship at Portsmouth ready to Sail which wanted their Dispatch. Alleged that Mr. Peter La Blond was gone sick to Bed. I took his word to speak with me in the morning. I consulted with Col. Thomas, who inclined to admonish them as young and strangers and let them go.

"Newbury, May 14, 1716. By long and by late I spake with Mr. Richard Gerrish, Jun^{r}, and Mr. Peter La Blond, by whom I understand they were at Mr. Wigglesworth in the morning, and at Ipswich meeting

[1] One of the delinquents.

in the Afternoon. Being in a strait, I had pray'd to God to direct. I consider'd Col. Thomas was not a Justice there; that this profanation of the Sabbath was very great; and the Transgressors fleeing from Town to Town and County to County could rarely be censured.[1] On the other hand they were young, Mr. La Blond's mother my neighbor, Mr. Gerrish had a smell of relation: both of them of another Province;[2] and I fear'd lest my Cousin's custom might be lessn'd by it, because I had the information from her husband whose wife, my Cousin was a Gerrish, and Cousin to this Rich[d]. Gerrish, only Child of Capt. Rich[d]. Gerrish of the Bank. Mr. La Blond apear'd Brisk as if he ail'd nothing. I came to this Resolution, that if they would make such a submission as this I would let them pass, viz: —

"We do acknowledge our Transgressions of the Law in Travailing upon the Lord's Day, May 13, 1716. And do promise not to offend in the like kind hereafter, as witness our Hands RICHARD GERRISH,
PETER LA BLOND.

"This offer they rejected with some Disdain and Mr. La Blond paid me a 30[s] and 10[s] Bill of Credit for both their Fines.

"Super[r] Court at Ipswich, May 19. Here Mr. Hern informs me that Gerrish and La Blond went from Platt's on the Lord's Day morn; He spake to

[1] Sewall, as a judge of the Superior Court, had general jurisdiction. A justice like Thomas was limited to his own county.

[2] New Hampshire.

them against it; They said they could but pay 5^{s}. Ferryman told me, Two were carried over about the time of going to meeting. Crompton informs me that they were at his house, and went not to Meeting at Ipswich; Went away late in the afternoon: So that they Travailed 22 Miles or more that day. I hope God heard my Prayer and directed me to do right and accepted me." There are here unmistakable signs of incipient revolt against the narrow Puritan legislation by the younger men, as well as curious pictures of bygone manners and habits of thought.

The bright, and at times almost tropical, summers of New England must have been the salvation of the colonists, for nothing else came to break the gloom. There were absolutely no amusements of any kind, and although establishing great political and religious principles and founding states are the noblest tasks to which men can set their hands, yet poor humanity requires withal some relaxation. Nature's winter was severe, but it lasted only for a season, while the social winter was never broken until the whole system began to give way in the eighteenth century. One or two unlucky individuals made efforts to furnish entertainment, but they were rigidly suppressed. We learn that—

"Mr. Francis Stepney, the Dancing Master, desired a Jury, so He and Mr. Shrimpton Bound in £50 to Jan^{r} Court. Said Stepney is ordered not to keep a Dancing School; if he does will be taken in contempt, and be proceeded with accordingly."

Another or worse attempt of a similar nature was checked without the intervention of the law: —

"In the Even Capt. Eliot, Frary, Williams and Self, Treat with Brother Wing about his Setting a Room in his House for a man to shew Tricks in. He saith, seeing 't is offensive, he will remedy it. It seems the Room is fitted with Seats. I read what Dr. Ames saith of Callings, and Spake as I could, from this Principle, That the Man's Practice was unlawfull, and therefore Capt. Wing could not lawfully give him an accomodation for it. Sung the 90th Ps. from the 12th v. to the end. Broke up."

Amusements and sports of all sorts were regarded with unfeigned dislike and were abolished at the outset, while at the same time there were but few social events to break the monotony. Anything in the nature of a party of pleasure was almost unknown. There were occasionally dinners, and now and then friends met in the afternoon for social enjoyment. The time was then passed in conversation, and the table seems to have been a generous one. But even these mild festivities were most unusual, and appear to have generally begun and ended with prayer. Once and again some wealthy man would make a feast on the marriage of his daughter, but as a rule weddings were solemnized with the utmost privacy and the least possible ceremony. One of the noticeable changes which followed the establishment of the provincial government was the comparatively rapid development of the pleasanter side of life. This was especially the

case as the eighteenth century advanced, bringing with it increased stability and prosperity, as well as a readiness and ability to spend money. The royal governors, especially Lord Bellomont and Colonel Shute were imbued with English ideas, loved ceremony and fine dressing, and brought the habits of the court, for the first time, into the sober Puritan town. In their train came various royal officers and red-coated soldiers, who introduced color into Boston life in other ways than by their dress, and who indulged in sports, led as gay a life as they could, occasionally fought duels, and not infrequently caused serious disturbances when they carried their violations of Puritan rules too far. Nothing indicates better the change induced by the appearance of these royal officers than Sewall's curt statement that on January 7, 1718, "The Gov^{r} had a ball at his own home, which lasts to 3 in the morn." But although the Puritans were much scandalized by the performances of the soldiers and by many of the innovations of the Englishmen, they insensibly relaxed their own strictness of life. They continued to frown on sports, but they had always been fond of good eating and drinking, and the number of dinner parties and what would now be called picnics greatly increased. It is evident that they lived well, and the amount of food provided for consumption at a dinner of ceremony is often extraordinary, and forcibly recalls the dinner party in Swift's "Polite Conversation," which Thackeray so amusingly analyzed.

The great and really the sole regular diversion, however, was found in going to funerals, for these were the only important incidents which, for many years, broke the dead monotonous level of existence, and a large number of entries in the diary relate to the obsequies of various persons. Owing to his character and position Sewall was constantly called upon to act as a pall-bearer, so that to him, perhaps, more than to most others, these events were a peculiar excitement. The religious feeling was first gratified by the prayers and exhortations at the bed of death, and by those afterwards addressed to the bereaved family. When the body was brought from the house religion ceased its functions. The old hatred of ceremonial manifested itself in the custom of the founders, which still lasted, of the friends bearing out the body and silently laying it in the tomb. Curiously enough, although these last rites had been stripped of all spiritual ceremonies, a great deal of temporal pomp had grown up around them. The "bearers' of the early days became pall-bearers, chosen from the magistrates and leading men of the state, to whom scarfs, rings, and gloves were distributed. If the deceased had been a soldier or magistrate the military companies marched to the grave, and in almost all cases there was a formal and regular procession through the streets. Verses appropriate to the occasion were generally written by friends, and were sometimes pinned upon the hearse according to the fashion of the day in London. Sewall has a long list of the funerals in which he took

part, and has jotted down the scarfs and rings which he received, and to which he was evidently not averse. His liking for funerals and their accompaniments is oddly shown in the following passage: —

"This day John Ive, fishing in great Spie-pond, is arrested with mortal sickness which renders him in a maner speechless and senseless; dies next day; buried at Charlestown on the Wednesday. Was a very debauched, atheistical man. I was not at his Funeral. Had Gloves sent me, but the knowledge of his notoriously wicked life made me sick of going; and Mr. Mather, the president, came in just as I was ready to step out, and so I staid at home, and by that means lost a Ring: but hope had no loss. Follow thou Me, was I supose more complied with, than if had left Mr. Mather's company to go to such a Funeral."

Nothing, however, is stranger than the manner in which death was regarded by the Puritans. Although they cultivated the greatest stoicism they nevertheless sorrowed like other men, and felt acutely the loss of those whom they loved, but their religion did not apparently console them as much by its promises as by its teaching. Death was the great event which brought them nearer to God than any other, and they forced themselves to rejoice at it as a high privilege and peculiar grace from which they could gather the lessons of their Lord and Master. On the day when Sewall buried his sixth child he visited the family tomb, upon which he says: —

"Note. T'was wholly dry, and I went at noon to see

in what order things were set; and there I was entertain'd with a view of, and converse with, the Coffins of my dear Father Hull, Mother Hull, Cousin Quinsey, and my Six Children; for the little posthumous was now took up and set in upon that that stands on John's: so are three, one upon another twice, on the bench at the end. My Mother ly's on a lower bench, at the end, with head to her Husband's head: and I order'd little Sarah to be set on her Grandmother's feet. 'T was an awfull yet pleasing Treat; Having said, The Lord knows who shall be brought hither next, I came away."

That he was not peculiar in his views, is shown by the following extract, which goes even farther in the same direction: "Mr. Joseph Eliot here, says the two days wherein he buried his Wife and Son, were the best that ever he had in the world."

But the Puritan system which excluded all amusements from daily life was in the last years of its complete existence when Sewall was writing the earlier portion of his diary. In this careful record we can easily follow the political as well as the social changes which rapidly succeeded the loss of the charter. We can watch the sullen resistance to Andros, which gradually gathered strength until it led James' governor to a prison. We can perceive that despite this opposition the political changes were not without effect. Slowly but surely they undermined the principles on which the government had been founded, and when the revolution came it only showed that the

days of the old system were over, that the Puritan theory of government had failed, and could not exist under the new conditions of established success and material well-being. But we can also see in the diary much more gradual but none the less certain alterations in the religious as well as the political system. Society and the church, as conceived and established by the earlier generation, struggled hard for existence, but they had ceased to be in sympathy with the age and its forces and they too gave way. One by one the old habits were invaded, and the old practices were broken down. The least important and the weakest went first, the most essential endured for many long years, only to fall at last, until finally the great Puritan and English principles of religious and political freedom, which can only perish with the race to which they belong, alone are left. In Sewall's diary every incident is noted. The worthy judge clung to every observance and every opinion of the past, and with deep regret noted the signs of their failing strength. We can count them all and see the whole fabric of society pass before us in the entries where the hated innovations are recorded.

Soberness of dress had become, in process of time, a strong tenet with the Puritans, and it was in these outward symbols that Sewall first detected the signs of a perilous change. The periwig was the first new fashion which excited the dread and anger of the conservative portion of the community, and Sewall hated it with a peculiar and enduring hatred. Even when

his own hair fell off in late life, he could not be persuaded to adopt the prevailing fashion, but contented himself with a black silk cap, and not even the objection of one of his elderly lady-loves whom he was assiduously courting could make him swerve from this unfashionable habit. He notes the first appearance of periwigs in Boston with fear and sorrow, and as the habit of wearing them became more common, he felt obliged to speak publicly and constantly against them, for his opposition was grounded on religious scruple, which would not permit him to be silent. In 1685 he writes: —

"Having occasion this day to go to Mr. Hayward the Publick Notary's House, I speak to him about his cutting off his Hair, and wearing a Perriwig of contrary Colour: mention the words of our Saviour, Can ye not make one Hair white or black: and Mr. Alsop's Sermon. He alledges, The Doctor advised him to it."

A year later he records the death of a man who made wigs, and we cannot help feeling that Sewall deemed the fate of this wretched creature a fit punishment for one who followed so nefarious a trade.

"This day Wm. Clendon the Barber and Perriwig-maker dies miserably, being almost eat up with Lice and stupified with Drink and cold. Sat in the watch-house and was there gaz'd on a good part of the day, having been taken up the night before."

All, however, were not so zealous or so firm as Sewall in this matter, for in 1691 we find the following melancholy entry: —

"March 19, 1690–1. Mr. C. Mather preaches the Lecture from Mat. 24, and appoint his portion with the Hypocrites: In his proem said, *Totus mundus agit histrionem.* Said one sign of a hypocrit was for a man to strain at a Gnat and swallow a Camel. Sign in 's Throat discovered him; To be zealous against an inocent fashion, taken up and used by the best of men; and yet make no Conscience of being guilty of great Immoralities. T'is supposed means wearing of Perriwigs: said would deny themselves in any thing but parting with an oportunity to do God service; that so might not offend good Christians. Meaning, I suppose was fain to wear a Perriwig for his health. I expected not to hear a vindication of Perriwigs in Boston Pulpit by Mr. Mather; however not from that Text. The Lord give me a good Heart and help me to know, and not only to know but also to doe his Will; that my Heart and Head may be his."

Others, however, remained faithful and steadfast, for in 1697 Sewall mentions that he strove to induce Mr. Higginson to print a treatise against the obnoxious and sinful periwigs. Still the hated and really senseless fashion made steady progress and continued to afford a topic for much gloomy comment in the diary. Tuesday, June 10, 1701, he writes: "Having last night heard that Josiah Willard[1] had cut off his hair (a very full head of hair) and put on a Wigg, I went to him this morning. Told his mother what

[1] Son of Rev. Joseph Willard. He had just been selected as the assistant of Sewall's pastor, Mr. Pemberton.

I came about, and She call'd him. I enquired of him what Extremity had forced him to put off his own hair and put on a Wigg? He answered none at all. But said that his Hair was streight and that it parted behinde. Seem'd to argue that men might as well shave their hair off their head, as off their face. I answered men were men before they had hair on their faces, (half of mankind have never any.) God seems to have ordain'd our Hair as a Test, to see whether we can bring our minds to be content to be at his finding: or whether we would be our own Carvers, Lords, and Come no more at Him. If disliked our Skin, or Nails; 't is no Thanks to us, that for all that, we cut them not off: Pain and danger restrain us. Your Calling is to teach men Self-Denial. T'will be displeasing and burdensome to good men: and they that care not what men think of them care not what God thinks of them. Father, Bro^r Simon, Mr. Pemberton, Mr. Wigglesworth, Oakes, Noyes, Oliver, Brattle of Cambridge their example. Allow me to be so far a *Censor Morum* for this end of the town. Pray'd him to read the Tenth Chapter of the Third book of Calvin's Institutions.[1] I read it this morning in course not of Choice. Told him that it (the wig) was condemn'd by a meeting of Ministers at Northampton in Mr. Stoddards house when the Said Josiah was there. Told him of the Solemnity of the covenant which he and I had lately Enter'd into which put me

[1] Entitled "Comment il faut user de la vie présente et ses aides."

upon discoursing to him. He seem'd to say would leave off his Wigg when his Hair was grown. I spake to his Father of it a day or two after: He thank'd me that had discoursed to his son, and told me that when his hair was grown to cover his ears, he promised to leave off his Wigg. If he had known of it would have forbidden him." Josiah, notwithstanding his promises, would appear to have been recalcitrant and a slave of fashion, so that Sewall seems to have felt it necessary to express still further his disapproval. In November of the same year he attended meeting at another church, apparently a very marked action, which he explained by saying: "I spent this Sabbath at Mr. Colman's partly out of dislike to Mr. Josiah Willard's cutting off his Hair and wearing a Wigg: He preached for Mr. Pemberton in the morning; He that contemns the Law of Nature is not fit to be a publisher of the Law of Grace."

In 1708, speaking of Mr. Chiever, the well-known Boston school-master, who had just died, Sewall says that he was "a rare instance of Piety, Health, Strength, Serviceableness. The Wellfare of the Province was much upon his Spirit. He abominated Perriwigs." Unfortunately, death gradually removed these admirable characters, and, as no one of like views succeeded them, Sewall was defeated and the obnoxious "Wigg" came into general use.

Another threatened change, and one far more vital in a religious point of view, was the matter of observing Christmas Day. Year after year Sewall watched

sedulously, and noted carefully, every sign which seemed to indicate that this papistical custom was not coming into vogue in Boston. He rejoiced on each succeeding Christmas that the people did not observe it, and were not compelled to do so by authority. The change in this matter was very slow, and is, in fact, still going on in New England, but yet there was enough two hundred years ago to cause Sewall the greatest anxiety. The new government distinctly and strongly favored the observance of Christmas, and there were, of course, many persons who found it profitable and congenial to comply; but the people in general seem to have been of Sewall's mind, and brought their wood to town and transacted their business on the 25th of December as on any other day. So earnest was Sewall on this point that he incurred the ill-will of the governor by his well-known opinions, of which he refused to abate one jot. In 1697 he makes the following characteristic entry: —

"Decembr. 25. 97. Snowy day: Shops are open, and Carts and sleds come to Town with Wood and Fagots as formerly, save what abatement may be allowed on account of the wether. This morning we read in course the 14, 15, and 16th Psalms. From the 4th v. of the 16th Ps ('their sorrows shall be multiplied that hasten after another god; their drink offerings of blood will I not offer nor take up their names into my lips.') I took occasion to dehort mine from Christmas-keeping, and charged them to forbear. Hañah reads Daniel, 6. and Betty, Luke, 12. Joseph

tells me that though most of the Boys went to the Church yet he went not."

With each recurring anniversary he made a similar entry and derived much pleasure from the fact that outside official circles and among the body of the people the observance of Christmas showed no progress. In 1714, after making the usual entry on December 25th, he writes: —

"Lord's Day, Decembr. 26th. Mr. Bromfield and I go and keep the Sabbath with Mr. John Webb, and sit down with that Church at the Lord's Table. I did it to hold communion with that Church; and so far as in me lay, to put Respect upon that affronted, despised Lord's Day. For the Church of England had the Lord's Sup̄er yesterday, the last day of the Week: but will not have it to-day, the day that the Lord has made. And Genl Nicholson who kept Satterday, was this Lord's day Rum̄aging and chittering with Wheelbarrows &c., to get aboard at the long wharf, and Firing Guns at Setting Sail. I thank God I heard not, saw not anything of it: but was quiet at the New North."

In 1722 Sewall tried hard to thwart the governor in adjourning the legislature over Christmas. A sharp discussion arose thereon in the Council, in the course of which Sewall said, "the Dissenters came a great way for their liberties and now the Church had theirs yet they could not be contented except might they tread all others down." The governor would not take a vote in the Council, but the next day adjourned the legis-

lature over Christmas to the disgust of Sewall, who still found comfort, however, in the fact that the people continued steadfast and paid no heed to the great feast of the Church.

Sewall had indeed no love for any of the holidays, because they were connected with the names of saints or with feasts of the Romish Church. In 1708, he says, "*Feria Quarta* Augt. 18. Yesterday the Gov'r comitted Mr. Holyoke's Almanack to me (presumably as licenser of the press); and looking it over, I blotted against Febr. 14th. *Valentine;* March 25. *Annunciation of the B. Virgin;* Apr. 24. *Easter;* Septr. 29, *Michaelmas;* Decr. 25. *Christmas;* and no more. K. C. Mart. [King Charles Martyr] was lined out, before I saw it; I touched it not."

More secular observances of certain days he also found objectionable. "April, 1. 1719. In the morning I dehorted Sam. Hirst and Grindal Rawson from playing Idle Tricks because 't was first of April; they were the greatest fools that did so. N. E. Men came hither to avoid aniversary days, the keeping of them such as the 25th of Decr. How displeasing must it be to God the giver of our Time to keep aniversary days to play the fool with ourselves and others."

Next to Christmas, Sewall's pet aversion was St. George's day, because the Church of England men and the soldiers then put on paper crosses, a practice which not only offended Sewall, but the people generally, who were not slow to retaliate, by degrading and insulting the symbol so needlessly worn. There are

several allusions to this subject in the diary, and in 1706 Sewall writes: —

"Tuesday, Apr. 23. Gov'r comes to Town guarded by the Troops with their swords drawn; dines at the Dragon, from thence proceeds to the Town house, Illuminations at night. Capt. Pelham tells me several wore crosses in their hats; which makes me resolve to stay at home; (though Maxwell was at my House and spake to me to be at the Council-Chamber at 4 p. m̄.) Because to drinking Healths, now the keeping of a day to fictitious St. George is plainly set on foot. It seems Capt. Dudley's men wore Crosses. Somebody had fasten'd a cross to a Dog's head; Capt. Dudley's Boatswain seeing him, struck the Dog, and then went into the Shop, next where the Dog was, and struck down a Carpenter, one Davis, as he was at work not thinking anything: Boatswain and the other with him were fined 10^{s} each for breach of the peace by Jer. Dum̄er Esq: pretty much blood was shed by means of this bloody Cross, and the poor Dog a sufferer." It was conduct of this sort, on the part of Englishmen, which bred in New England the readiness for revolution, and it has therefore much significance; but nevertheless one cannot help smiling at Sewall's compassion for the dog.

The old system was in fact slipping away. Men began to violate, with impunity, the commands of the Bible as to dress, and to run after the customs of Rome in the matter of holy days, and there was no longer the strong hand of the law to stop them in

such courses. Public opinion, too, had weakened, and breaches of Puritan doctrine were no longer regarded with abhorrence. Sewall did well to dread the progress of these innovations, for they were sure signs that the end of that great movement which once swayed the English world was at hand.

Other indications of the same tendency were not wanting. As early as 1681, Sewall remarks with disgust, that Mrs. Randolph, the wife of the spy and informer who was sent out under Charles II. to gather evidence against the charter, bowed in church at the name of Jesus. Another matter which gave rise to endless disputes and much heart-burning was the introduction of the English custom of swearing on and kissing the Bible instead of simply holding up the hand in the Puritan manner. In fact, everything relating to the English Church was hateful to the Puritans of New England as savoring of Popery. One matter of deep import in this connection taught the Puritan community its first hard lesson of an enforced toleration. After a stubborn resistance the English service was heard in Boston, and by authority of Andros was read within the walls of the Old South, and under the provincial government was permanently established. To the inhabitants this seemed little else than desecration, for in their eyes the Book of Common Prayer was only a poor variety of the Popish mass. The gradual appearance of the rites of the English Church is sadly recorded by Sewall. In 1686 he writes: "Augt. 5. Wm. Harrison, the Bodies-maker, is buried, which is

the first that I know of buried with the Common-Prayer Book in Boston." In a similar way, he gloomily notes the first marriage in the Episcopal form. We can hardly realize now the importance attached by these people to outward signs. They looked upon them as inroads upon the outer bulwarks and defenses of the great doctrines for which they had suffered so many things. A few days after the entry just quoted Sewall says: "I was and am in great exercise about the Cross to be put into the Colours, and afraid if I should have a hand in 't whether it may not hinder my Entrance into the Holy Land." The old spirit which had moved John Endicott to tear the cross from the colors because it savored of idolatry was not yet wholly dead in New England. But it is not easy to conceive now the frame of mind in which a man doubted his salvation because the device in the national flag was not to his taste.

The change of government and the introduction of the Church service opened the way of course for many of the habits and customs of that period in England, and there were many persons, galled by the rigid Puritan restraint, who took advantage of the recent relaxation to indulge themselves with pleasures which greatly shocked the sober inhabitants of Boston.

"Friday, Sept. 3, 1686. Mr. Shrimpton, Capt. Lidget and others, come in a Coach from Roxbury about 9. aclock or past, singing as they come, being inflamed with Drink: At Justice Morgan's they stop and drink Healths; curse, swear, talk profanely and baudily to

the great disturbance of the Town and grief of good people. Such high-handed wickedness has hardly been heard of before in Boston."

The revival of English sports gave almost as deep offense as open revel. Shrove Tuesday offered the first opportunity.

"Feb. 15, 1686–7. Jos. Maylem carries a Cock at his back, with a Bell in 's hand, in the Main Street; several follow him blindfold, and under pretence of striking him or 's cock, with great cart-whips strike passengers, and make great disturbance."

These sports were checked after the fall of Andros, when the reaction was strong in favor of the old system, but during his supremacy they went on increasing, and added no doubt considerably to the unpopularity of the government. No heed was given to the popular prejudices in these matters, and it seemed as if the court party even tried to insult the inhabitants, when we learn that on parade the officers pinned red paper crosses upon their breasts. The English soldiers, now seen in Boston for the first time, of course took a leading part in all these sports. They had matches with the quarter staff and stage fights, and two officers even fought a duel on the Common in Boston, for which they were promptly arrested. These practices and amusements took a fresh lease of life and showed renewed vigor after the establishment of the provincial government; but they were carried on less objectionably, and popular opinion was somewhat modified, although they were cordially disliked

by such men as Sewall, and no doubt, in some respects, contributed to alienate the people from the mother country. They were most offensive at the outset under Andros, when they were paraded with a wanton disregard of the feelings of the people, and the general disgust excited by this stupid indifference to public sentiment, so characteristic of James II. and his servants, is well shown by the following passage, written in 1687 : —

"It seems the May-pole at Charlestown was cut down last week, and now a bigger is set up, and a Garland upon it. A Souldier was buried last Wednesday and disturbance grew by reason of Joseph Phips standing with 's hat on as the Parson was reading Service. 'T is said Mr. Saml. Phips bid or encouraged the Watch to cut down the May-pole, being a Select-Man. And what about his brother and that, the Captain of the Fisher and he came to blows, and Phips is bound to answer next December, the Governour having sent for him before Him yesterday, May 26, 1687."

Such affronts, even in trivial matters, probably had as much to do with the revolt against Andros as the graver attacks upon the liberties of the colonists. The diary throws but little new light upon the purely political history of the time, and none at all upon the very obscure point of the actual outbreak. We are left as much in the dark as ever in regard to the conduct of that successful rebellion, and are compelled to fall back on the old theory that the movement was

wholly popular in its origin, and that the leading men of the community had nothing to do with it until success was assured. One point, however, is illustrated in the strongest manner in the diary, and that is the exact nature of the Andros government. Sewall recounts, of course, all the various high-handed measures of the governor as they are to be found in all histories of New England, but he shows very clearly that the rule of Andros was by no means that of a bloody-minded tyrant, as it was the fashion to consider him for many years after his fall. The government of Andros in Massachusetts was an exact reproduction in little of the government of his master in England. Both honestly thought their objects were good, and both were indifferent to the means by which those objects were attained. They were perfectly blind to the actual conditions under which they had to act, and were convinced that a system could be set up and maintained which was utterly distasteful to the great body of the people. Both succeeded in offending the moderate leaders, the men who were ready to bear much rather than resist, and both sealed their fate by so doing. What, for example, could have been more unwise than to drive such a man as Sewall to the wall by enforcing against him the unjust policy of requiring new patents for all land in New England? The policy in itself was bad enough, but to carry it out inexorably against a prominent, respected, and moderate man like Sewall was the height of folly. The case, unfortunately, was typical of the reign of James. For

blind stupidity, the administration of the last Stuart attained an eminence in all parts of the English empire which can hardly be surpassed in history.

On one point the diary of Sewall is very disappointing. There is next to nothing about the witchcraft delusion, although its author was one of the judges of the special court which tried and condemned the unhappy victims of that excitement. He was, therefore, a chief actor in the whole business, and when seized with remorse, made the manly confession already alluded to. We had a right to expect full details from such a man on a subject which is even more interesting psychologically than it is historically. A few brief and passing allusions are, however, all that Sewall permits himself on this topic. From one of them his profound belief in the reality of witchcraft is apparent, while another brings forcibly to mind the wretched victim of the *peine forte et dure* who, refusing to plead, was pressed to death. But that is all, and it is difficult to explain the writer's silence on a matter which absorbed the attention of the whole community, and in which he himself took such a leading part. Perhaps even then he had begun to suspect his own convictions, or, as was more probable, perhaps his whole heart and soul were so infected by the superstitious epidemic then raging in the colony, that he was in no mood to record, in the cold pages of a diary, the stirring events and terrible thoughts that must have beset him. However this may be, we learn nothing from the man who, above all others, was in a position

to give to posterity the best account of the trials and executions for witchcraft.

His frank and honest repentance in this matter illustrates one of the curious contradictions in Sewall's character. He was clearly a generous-minded man, not only perpetually doing little kindnesses, but always ready to help the afflicted, and not ashamed to admit that he had been in the wrong and to confess his faults. He was also a very liberal man in certain ways. He has the honor of having been one of the very first of civilized men in modern times to publicly protest against African slavery and the slave-trade. In 1700 he published a tract directed against the traffic in human beings, and deserves for this act, if for nothing else, lasting remembrance. At the same time he was, as we have seen, narrow, and even harsh in religious matters. He submitted to the establishment of the Church of England in Boston because it could not be helped, but he detested it cordially, and in 1708 he bitterly opposed granting permission to the Quakers to erect a meeting-house for the celebration of what he calls their "Devil's Worship." Both the liberality and the narrowness are typical of the man and of the time in which he lived. Both sprang from the conscientiousness which was the most marked trait of the Puritan, and their combination represents the period of transition when New England turned slowly from the stern, grand, and uncompromising system of the early settlers, and, tacitly admitting that the great experiment had failed, began to modify and relax her

policy and adapt herself imperceptibly but still steadily to a broader civilization and a more generous if less vigorous creed.

The first volume of the diary concludes with the establishment of the new political system under Phips, and the arrival of his successor, Lord Bellomont. The two last give us a picture of New England under the provincial government. They are distinctly less important than the first, and their most amusing if not their most interesting passages are those in the third volume, which narrate at great length the author's courtships. After forty-four years of married life, Sewall's first wife died, and within five months the bereaved husband was contemplating matrimony again. He first paid his addresses to Mrs. Winthrop, the widow of his friend, General Wait Still Winthrop. Receiving but slight encouragement, he turned to Mrs. Dennison, whose husband's will he had lately probated. Much courting and interminable discussions about settlements ensued. The financial arrangements, however, promised so ill that Sewall broke the affair off, although he says "his bowels yearned to Mrs. Dennison," and although the lady came to his house to see him and urge him to change his unfavorable decision. Soon afterwards he married the Widow Tilley who lived less than a year; and then the disconsolate widower, for the second time, addressed himself to Mrs. Winthrop. He evidently had set his heart on this match and the wooing was protracted. The chief subject of discussion was, of course, set-

tlements, but there were other and tenderer passages between them. He evinced a decided fondness for kissing his lady-love, and for holding her hand, as appears by his saying on one occasion, "Ask'd her to acquit me of Rudeness if I drew off her Glove. Enquiring the reason, I told her t'was great odds between handling a dead Goat and a living Lady. Got it off." Nevertheless his elderly ardor could not overcome the money difficulties. He declined to keep a coach or wear a wig and the lady finally forced him to abandon his suit. He then tried a Mrs. Ruggles, and finally, after another protracted wrangle over settlements, married Mrs. Gibbs who survived him. The whole story is minutely told, and is very entertaining to the student of character, although it must be admitted that it brings into strong relief the petty as well as the sensual side of Sewall's nature, and does not do justice to the many noble qualities which he really possessed.

The more public matters of historical interest in these two last volumes are not many. We have already seen the gradual social changes which they depict, and apart from this the most important points are the decline of the influence of the once all-powerful clergy and the steady development of a compact and skillful opposition to the English governors. The struggle of the clergy to maintain their position in the state, after the old political system had been swept away, is a most interesting chapter in our history. It began with the witchcraft excitement, to which it largely contributed,

and afterwards centred in the conflict as to the control of the college. There the battle was stubbornly fought by the Mathers, who led the old church party; but they were hopelessly beaten by the astute Dudley, who, as governor, represented the purely temporal power. We catch sight of other evidences of their waning power when Sewall notes in 1702 that the ministers were much disgusted because the representatives went first when the queen was proclaimed; and again, when he says, in 1717, that the governor turned to talk to somebody as the ministers went out of church, and so had his back to them, a grave affront in those days. Indeed, we can see plainly throughout the two last volumes how fast the old clericalism was losing ground. The tide of public opinion had begun to set strongly against the vigorous but narrow theories of the early Puritans, and the general drift is also shown by the manner in which mooted theological questions are discussed at length in the diary. Great differences of opinion and broader views on many points of doctrine were evidently beginning to creep in. The old system was at an end, and more liberal modes of thought were coming in fashion. So it was with the purely political matters. The old spirit of independence had vanished, and a new one was gradually arising which was destined to replace it. Sewall himself was an eminently moderate man, but he was usually in opposition to the governor for the time being, and when he had once decided on his course nothing could stir him. The fire of controversy often

burned low, but it never went out; the least attempt to increase executive power was jealously resisted and the popular party slowly but surely gained ground. It was on the whole a very quiet time, but the people were being steadily trained to Parliamentary resistance, and they needed no education to teach them to protect their rights and liberties. A new era had opened for Massachusetts and New England, and in those peaceful days during the early years of the eighteenth century the seeds of the future political history of the country were sown. The dark days of the first settlement, the rigid system of untrammeled Puritanism, the great objects, the high and independent policy of the company of Massachusetts Bay were at end. The period of repose had come, for the English world needed rest after the fierce struggles of the seventeenth century. But it is during that time of inactivity that the people of New England gathered fresh strength and the new forces came into existence which made the revolution of 1776 a possibility and a success.

THE EARLY DAYS OF FOX.

THE study of great political changes and convulsions always reveals their inevitable character, if we go beyond the immediate incidents and seek the remote causes which are to be found in a long course of years in the life, habits, and condition of the people, and in the general course of social and political development. This was preëminently the case with the French revolution, whose forces had been slowly gathering from the time of the Edict of Nantes, and even earlier, until they reached a point where the only possible solution was in a rending and tearing of the body politic, so terrible that it was brought to almost absolute dissolution. In the "Great Rebellion" again, while the acts which precipitated civil strife — the ship-money and the church policy, the war with Scotland and the attempted seizure of the five members — lie on the surface, the causes which made the great change unavoidable, in one form or another, must be sought far back at the beginning of the century in the dreary and seemingly petty conflicts of the reign of James I. These examples have been taken merely because they are obvious and familiar, but the

same proposition holds true of all similar events in the history of mankind.

To this rule of remote causes our own revolution, which secured our independence, seems at first sight to form a marked exception. This does not mean, of course, that the colonists were not justified in rebellion, or that they went to war without ample provocation. Nothing, on the contrary, is clearer, or at this day more generally admitted, than that they were wholly in the right, and that if men ever had good reason to fight for a principle, they had. There was, in fact, no choice. They exhausted every resource of argument, petition, and legal opposition, and then appealed to arms to decide between them and their mother country. When it is said that our revolution was without remote causes, we mean that one can start with the accession of William of Orange, and come down to the period of the Stamp Act, and in all those years fail to find in the colonies themselves a single indication that, before the century closed, they would be compelled to readjust their relations with England by revolution. The provinces were vigorous, growing English communities, full of vitality and accustomed to great political freedom. The people wrangled steadily with their governors, it is true, for they had always managed their affairs pretty much as they pleased; they lived in a new country where tradition was weak, and they resented, in genuine English fashion, anything like undue outside interference with their own concerns. This shows that they needed ju-

dicious, firm management, and a colonial policy at once generous and appreciative. If this had been the policy, and above all if there had been no busy and ignorant meddling, all would have gone well. The colonists were perfectly contented with their lot, were thoroughly loyal, loved the mother country, gloried in her victories, sorrowed for her defeats, and had a profound pride in the great empire of which they constituted so important a part. There is absolutely nothing in the history of the English people in America, during the first half of the eighteenth century, to suggest a revolution by force of arms; much less anything which gives it an inevitable character. The colonies were developing naturally and harmoniously in well-defined and fitting lines. It is easy to say that the conquest of Canada loosened the bonds which held America to England; but mere increase of opportunity is far from equivalent to cause. It is equally simple to trace the measures from the passage of the Stamp Act to the Declaration of Independence, which brought on revolution with sure and steady steps. But the revolution began with the Stamp Act; and great revolutions do not spring from the false policy of a narrow-minded minister in the night, and come to maturity in ten years. The immediate causes of the American revolution are clear and plentiful; the remote, far-reaching, and true causes cannot be found in the colonies themselves. The revolution was, in fact, not merely American, but one which affected the whole English race, and which produced results in

England only less important than those which it produced here. The remote and governing causes must be looked for elsewhere than in the colonies; and they well repay the search, for the magnitude of their effects can hardly be overestimated. If Sir Robert Walpole's policy of "*Quieta non movere*" had been pursued; if his treatment of the colonies had been simply continued, and if they had been allowed to work out their own destiny in their own way, — it requires no very violent stretch of the imagination to guess at the result. They would have gone hand in hand with England in the great conflict with France; the political ties would have slowly and imperceptibly weakened; they would have become too powerful to be governed in any degree otherwise than by themselves; and mother and child would finally have parted politically, but have still been held by affection and interest, and possibly united by a treaty of alliance. Perhaps it is as well for the rest of mankind that this is not the case, and that such a gigantic power should not now exist; but its possibility is no very extravagant hypothesis, and the events which prevented its completion and raised up a new nation — to-day the greatest and most powerful in the world — well deserve a close study of their remote causes.

The sources of the American revolution, which beyond the most general conditions imposed by circumstances are sought in vain in the history of the colonies, can readily be discovered in England, whose empire was then unbroken. There the forces which

led to this far-reaching change may be found, and there may their growth be traced. The seventeenth century was a period of revolution and turmoil. The victory of constitutional liberty was won with the Prince of Orange, confirmed by the succession of the House of Brunswick, and secured, during the reigns of the first two Georges, by that great statesman, Sir Robert Walpole, who gives his name to the period in which he ruled and to the policy which he originated and established. The object of Walpole was to give England complete rest both at home and abroad in order to allow her strength to be recuperated, her stability to be restored, and, above all, finally to repress contention for the crown and secure the Protestant succession. That the work was well done the fate of the Young Pretender amply proved. Charles Edward marched to Derby, the inert and feeble ministry quaking with idle fear, and then fell back in ignominious retreat, defeated solely by the inaction of the English Jacobites and the cold dislike of the English people. If this had stood alone, Walpole's wisdom would have been amply justified: but his foresight and sagacity were still further shown when Mr. Pitt, in every way his exact opposite, came to the head of affairs. Dragging England from the slough into which she had been plunged by that greatest of office peddlers and meanest of men, the Duke of Newcastle, Pitt raised his country to the height of glory by lavishing, with unstinted hand, the strength which had been stored up by Walpole. We may dislike the

methods of the minister who declared, with more truth than civility, "that every man had his price;" but no one can question either his greatness, his services, or his success.

At the same time it must also be admitted that Walpole's policy and methods had grave faults of their own, or rather magnified and fostered the evil tendencies of the time. In the first place, the issue on which party lines were drawn was almost entirely a moral and personal issue. Constitutional liberty and English freedom had been saved by the revolution of 1688, and the maintenance of the Protestant succession and of the House of Brunswick was the pledge of their security. All that was asked of any man was that he should shout for King George, and cry "Down with King James!" and those who refused soon came to be looked upon as essentially bad men. It was only necessary that a man should be sound on the "main question" to be a good and ruling Whig. If his dynastic views were correct, a Whig might be as corrupt as he pleased, or hold any opinions he chose on any subject of finance, taxation, or administration. This was the result of a struggle in which the life of the nation had been at stake, and when political definitions and estimates of character were correspondingly simple. Its effect, however, as has always been the case in like instances both before and since, was disastrous in the extreme to the party to whom victory had given uncontrolled power. Every principle of honor and morality was sapped

and degraded. Walpole, unfortunately, who was neither refined nor sensitive, used the base passions of the time to serve his own ends, and in so doing subjected them to a hot-house culture. The Whig party became utterly and miserably corrupt and factious, while the Jacobites — who, as a hopeless minority, were necessarily for a longer time a party of conscience and honor — eventually through the dexterous manipulation of Walpole came to be every whit as bad as their opponents. One well-known anecdote sums up, as clearly as possible, the condition of political morality and personal honor among English statesmen in the reign of George II. Walpole and Hardwicke were wrangling over the terms upon which the latter should be made chancellor; and at last Walpole said, "I must offer the seals to Fazakerly!" "Fazakerly!" exclaimed Hardwicke, "impossible! he is certainly a Tory, perhaps a Jacobite!" "It's all very true," said Sir Robert; "but if by one o'clock you do not accept my offer, Fazakerly by two becomes Lord Keeper and one of the stanchest Whigs in all England." As every one knows, Lord Hardwicke was the next chancellor.

Politics in truth had become not simply a mere game, but nothing more than a scramble for places, pensions, contracts, and sinecures. A seat in Parliament was bought to acquire influence which could be sold, and offices were valued simply in proportion to the plunder they afforded. Sir Robert Walpole was dragged from power by a combination of greedy fac-

tions, and every successive ministry met its fate in the same way. No principle was ever involved in a change of administration: it was a mere question of "connections" and "arrangements," the distribution of patronage and the share in the spoils. No one escaped the contagion. Mr. Pitt was an almost solitary exception even in the sordid point of pecuniary honesty, and yet he too could employ a magnificent servility toward his sovereign, and was constantly dealing in his own grand manner in arrangements and intrigues. When he came to power it was by throwing the patronage which he despised to the Duke of Newcastle, as one would throw a bone to a hungry cur; and his advent was not on a question of policy, but because it was absolutely necessary to secure a great statesman and still greater war minister to carry England through a hitherto disastrous struggle. The glories of Pitt's administration, which hushed and dazzled Parliament and raised the English race to the highest pitch of greatness which they ever reached under one flag, lift the wretched history of corrupt factions into a purer atmosphere of broad statesmanship and victorious war. The accession of George III. drove Pitt into retirement, nominally on the issue of war or peace; but the change meant really a reversion to an even worse condition of politics than that which had preceded his ministry.

The degradation of public life and public morals was now about to bear fruit. Sooner or later a sovereign was certain to come who would see that by cor-

ruption the power which had been grasped by the Whig aristocracy could be torn from them; that it would then be possible to restore the crown to the position which it had occupied in the time of Charles II. Everything, however delusive in reality, was to a king in appearance at least peculiarly favorable. The Jacobites and Tories were ready to transfer their loyalty from the hopeless cause of the Stuarts to the reigning house of Brunswick, and they and the Scotch were fully prepared to support any stretch of the prerogative. The once all-powerful Whig party was rent with bitter factions and honey-combed with political and pecuniary corruption, so that their politics, as Dr. Johnson said, were no better than the politics of stock-jobbers and the religion of infidels. A far stupider man than George III. would have seen his opportunity and seized it; a wiser man would have grasped it in order to use it to good and beneficent purpose. A great prince would have appealed to the people, and, as the popular leader, would have beaten down the oligarchy which hedged the throne, oppressed the masses, and stifled all proper public responsibility. A king of narrow mind and mean ambitions would have seen only the chance to wrest from the aristocracy the power which he coveted for himself, and would have used against his nobles the same demoralizing and debauched methods which they had employed against him and against the people. Unluckily for England George III. was a ruler of the latter type, and was eager to make the most of his opportunities with noth-

ing but the smallest and most selfish ends in view. The condition of affairs was certainly perilous enough. Parliament was open to almost any daring or evil scheme; the king was bent upon restoring the power of the crown; the state was loaded with crying abuses; the great political families were either fighting savagely with each other, or devising new combinations for office-holding, accompanied always with fresh instances of political profligacy and a further extension of corruption; and underneath all this, among an unrepresented people of keen political instincts, was a mass of seething, blind, inarticulate opposition and a hot desire for a redress of grievances which they could not themselves explain. It is to this scene in English history that Mr. Trevelyan has addressed himself in the "Early History of Fox."[1]

The subject is a fine one. The period is full of salient points and of strong contrasts of light and shade. It is suited especially to a historian of the school of Lord Macaulay, to which Mr. Trevelyan belongs; and indeed, partly by inheritance, partly perhaps by unconscious imitation, his style is strongly tinged with the rich colors employed so unsparingly by his uncle. The early days of Fox demand a writer with talents of this kind, and with the cast of mind to which the picturesque in history appeals more strongly than anything else, for in historical coloring and effective incident it is, like many other periods

[1] *Early History of Charles James Fox.* By George Otto Trevelyan. 1880.

of moral and political degradation, marvelously rich. Those were the halcyon days of the aristocracy in point of mere power; and the outside of the time glitters with wit and learning, with art, literature, and belles-lettres, just as the rich and brilliant dress of the fine ladies and gentlemen sparkled with jewels. It was the age of Chatham and Burke; of Wilkes, Beckford, and Junius; of Barré, Camden, Shelburne, and Conway; of Johnson, Goldsmith, and Garrick. They all live for us upon the gracious and noble canvases of Sir Joshua Reynolds, and the great leaders stand out in history against a gorgeous background of royalty, titles, nobility, and wealth. It was, too, the age of letter-writing, when correspondence was one of the fine arts, — neither too expensive nor too difficult, as it had been a century before, nor too rapid and easy, as it is at the present day. For this reason rich material lies on the surface, and the picturesque historian does not need to delve deeply, but can gather everything he wants with little pains, troubled only by the task of selection and arrangement. This is the case with Mr. Trevelyan. With Walpole alone, almost, — certainly with Walpole supplemented by a dozen or twenty of the best known lives, memoirs, and collections of letters, — this volume, so far as mere material goes, might readily have been written. The investigation of the betting-book at Brookes' is an exception to the general rule; and the results of this bit of research are not only curious, but cast a bright beam of light upon the fashionable and fast life of the

time. The art of a writer like Mr. Trevelyan does not lie, however, in the collection of masses of new material from dusty archives, and the illumination of dark places by deductions which he would thus be enabled to draw. "How do you mix your colors?" asked a friend of Gilbert Stuart. "As I do sugar in my tea, according to my taste," replied the great portrait painter. In the same way it is a question of taste with writers of Mr. Trevelyan's school. They are to be tried not by the depth of their research or the profundity of their science, but by the fineness of their art. Yet they also teach the lessons and the philosophy of history, when they do their work well, much better than those who occupy a species of historical pulpit and sadden us by their judicial lectures and learned sermons. Mr. Trevelyan's purpose is to present a many-sided picture of a certain period, and his merit consists in the skill of his drawing and coloring with the materials open to all and readily accessible. In this field he has achieved a signal success. He has the true sense of historic effect; and he has, what is equally important, the keen love of politics and the strong sympathy with politicians, especially of the Whig school, so essential to the writer who seeks not only to understand the period in question, but to interest his readers in the turns and windings of political management and intrigue. Mr. Trevelyan's book unrolls a panorama of the early years of George III., vigorous in drawing and brilliant in coloring, vivid and distinct. But at this point Mr. Trevelyan stops. He does not seek

to disclose the springs of the machinery which he describes; he does not give us the reasons for the existence of the phenomena he has portrayed; he does not tell us what his picture meant at the moment, or what it portended in the future. In thus limiting himself there can be no doubt that Mr. Trevelyan is artistically right. He leaves his picture to speak for itself to every one who looks upon it, and does not attempt to aid them by a running commentary or explanation. But to the critic or student who is not content to say "brilliant, clever, interesting," and there an end, the very things which the author omits are those of the deepest interest.

Mr. Trevelyan, however, strikes the key-note in the opening pages, where he speaks of his subject as "a period of transition." It was indeed above all a period of change. The same forces were at work in England which, before the century closed, were felt throughout the western world with the most momentous results. Aristocracy and despotism had in the most enlightened countries done their work as political systems, and in their progress they had become loaded with abuses. Aristocracy might be so modified as still to do good service; but if this failed, then it and despotism alike were doomed: they were passing away, and the problem was how the change could be most easily accomplished. Future history was to be made up of the rise of democracy and the spread of the doctrine of the greatest good of the greatest number, as the true aim of society and government. The

student in his library can see all this to-day plainly enough, but it was very dark to the men of the eighteenth century. Some were in absolute darkness, — blind, mole-like Tories like Dr. Johnson, and noblemen and gentry not blessed with sufficient strength of intellectual vision. Other and greater minds saw as through a glass darkly, and had even then begun to grope their way about in search of the true means of solving the mighty problem which they felt pressing upon them. To this class belonged in a certain sense Chatham, and in every sense Burke, although he went astray subsequently in the madness naturally awakened by the "Terror." Besides these two there were also Conway, Shelburne, Fox at a later time, and the younger Pitt when he first became minister. But when Mr. Trevelyan's hero came upon the stage of public life the night had not yet lifted; the king was trying his not unreasonable experiment of building up the power of the crown; and a revolution which rent the empire in twain had to be faced before the reforms begun by Fox, continued by Pitt, and arrested for fifty years by the French Revolution became even barely possible. It was, in short, the opening period of the era of change and transition with which the eighteenth century closed and the nineteenth began; a very dangerous and inflammable period, full of possibilities of great good and great evil, and very imperfectly understood by those who acted in it and swayed its fortunes.

Some of Mr. Trevelyan's critics have taken him to

task for calling Charles Fox "the first of modern English statesmen." The description is possibly a little too sweeping, but it is essentially correct. In all that time there is no man so thoroughly typical of the period of transition as Fox. Starting as an adherent of the ministry, as a follower of the dark and tortuous path trodden by his father, Fox became on the one hand a leader of the old constitutional Whigs, clinging to their aristocratic traditions, and venerating the principles of the "happy revolution;" while on the other he was a man of the future, the reformer of abuses at home and in the colonies, the opponent of slavery, the generous champion of the American colonists and of the people of France. There grew up about him, in his later years, a set of men who, beginning with domestic reform, with slavery and the criminal law, finally, by themselves or by their followers and descendants, effected the great changes of 1832, which gave us the England of the present day. Fox was the connecting link between the statesmen of the eighteenth century and those of recent times; but in all his best and most characteristic qualities he may be fitly styled "the first of modern English statesmen." The ties which bound him to the past led him into the errors and mistakes which warped and maimed his career. It was the Fox of the eighteenth century who served under Lord North, and who entered into the Coalition of 1782. It was the Fox of the nineteenth century, the first and by far the greatest of modern English statesmen, who

struggled for reform; who almost alone and with the most splendid courage confronted overwhelming majorities, and saw the real meaning and good of the French Revolution through the murky clouds of the "Terror;" and it was this Charles Fox, the lovable and the beloved, who came to be the hero and demigod of the best school of English public men.

The early days of Fox were his worst days. Indeed, in the opening years of his life it is not easy to discover the great liberal of the future. Yet like all the rest of Fox's career his early life was typical. He inherited the doctrines of his father, who was, perhaps, as bad an example as could be found of all the political vices of the eighteenth century in England. Offices and plunder were the creed of the first Lord Holland; and his son, making himself master of these and backed by bought majorities, astonished the House of Commons by his brilliant, youthful rhetoric, attacking what was right with the same success which he won in later years when he denounced what was wrong. It was the way of the world into which Charles Fox was born, and he took up all the ways of that world with equal extravagance and success.

This period, drawn so vividly for us by Mr. Trevelyan, and in which Charles Fox was cutting a figure which extorted praise and wonder even from the grudging pen of Horace Walpole, was pregnant with great possibilities and destined to bring forth vast changes. The time was ripe for wise and beneficent reforms; it was also ripe for revolution and disaster,

and it fell to the lot of George III. to solve the problem. George III. has been, to our thinking, a much-misunderstood character. The popular idea seems to be that he was a well-meaning, honest, stupid, and obstinate man, of irreproachable private life and high notions of the prerogative. There is in this, of course, an element of truth; but owing largely to Thackeray his domestic virtues have obscured his public conduct. In his family George III. led the decent, narrow, dull life of a respectable provincial shopkeeper or farmer. It was an agreeable contrast, it must be confessed, to the loose living of his grandfather, the weak profligacy of his father, and the weaker and still worse profligacy of his son. At the same time George II., on the whole, was a far more estimable character than his grandson and a far better king. The latter's plain domestic virtues, which gave way readily enough at need, — as when the queen made herself the protectress of the tarnished reputation of Mrs. Hastings, — did a world of harm to England. Respectability in private life served George III. many a good turn in his abandoned public career; for it is hardly going too far to say that, from a public point of view, he was one of the worst kings who ever filled the English throne. He was anything but a stupid man; on the contrary, he had good natural abilities and a prodigious capacity for work. He saw the opportunity offered by English politics of regaining by corruption what force had failed to maintain, and this opportunity he set himself to improve with the sole idea

of building up his own power and prerogatives. He showed in his proceedings a good deal of sagacity; and his obstinacy was not a mark of dullness, but was closely akin to the quality of firmness which has been of service to many greater men. He fomented and encouraged every factious quarrel, until he had effaced party distinctions and made combinations not merely difficult, but well-nigh impossible. He built up a party in politics utterly devoid of principle, and held together solely by attachment to his person. He used every form of corruption in a way which would have astonished even Sir Robert Walpole. Unscrupulous ability he cherished, as in the case of Thurlow and Wedderburn; but he admitted no other, and most of his ministers were chiefly conspicuous for arrogance and ignorance. His falseness was as great, almost, as that of the first Charles. There was not an enemy and hardly a friend whom he did not sooner or later betray, if he thought himself liable to be thwarted, or saw in perfidy the means of gaining a point. Such a king was a dangerous ruler for England in 1760, and George had only too good grounds for hoping that his experiment would succeed. He failed by shortness of vision, not through lack of clearness of perception. He saw distinctly his immediate object and all the methods of attaining it; but he saw very dimly, if at all, the remote consequences and the hidden and controlling forces with which he had to grapple. He paid no heed to the people, that great force which would have brought him a noble triumph, but thought only

of himself and mean personal aggrandizement. He did not reckon sufficiently upon the power of resistance, the inborn political sense and strong love of liberty inherent in the great mass of the English race. He heard the voices about him, those of court, society, and Parliament, and they flattered his hopes; but he was deaf to the sound of the far mightier voices which came up in hoarse murmurs from an unrepresented and misgoverned people. How far George III. could have advanced if he had confined himself exclusively to England is an open question, so far as momentary success is concerned, although there could have been ultimately but one result. Everything certainly promised an immediate victory. The opposition was gradually divided, broken up, and discredited by the royal policy, until nothing remained to it but eloquence, character, and ability. All these it had, but few votes, and no power. A ministry was at last developed in command of a strong and servile majority and wholly subservient to the crown; in short, a ministry of the king's friends. The outlook at the close of the first decade of George's reign certainly promised well for the prerogative. The king's scheme, in fact, had gone so far that the real question was, at bottom, not whether there would be a revolution, but when and where the revolution would come. George III. forced it forward, and made reform impossible and revolution sure. The warnings of the impending storm were clear enough, but no one heeded them. Wilkes and the Middlesex election shook the kingdom from one

end to the other, and the excitement of the popular mind at that moment foretold surely the result of the royal policy if persisted in. But the king carried the day and believed himself stronger than ever, and the lesson of the Middlesex electors taught him and his advisers nothing. The shrill diatribes of Junius struck a responsive chord throughout the country, because they expressed the inarticulate rage of a people shockingly misgoverned. The court strove to suppress them because they were abusive and seditious, and tended to excite the people; but they failed to see that the real meaning and danger of Junius lay not in what he wrote, but in something beyond the reach of prosecutions, — in the popular sympathy with the hidden writer, in the echo of his words among hundreds who felt dumbly all that Junius expressed. But George III. and his abettors saw none of this: they did not see what the eighteenth century had been preparing; they only knew that they were gaining strength, that they had control of Parliament, and that they had wrested power from the great Whig families. The Whig aristocracy had driven James from the throne and established the House of Brunswick. If this aristocracy, therefore, fell before the crown, who were left to resist the king? The men who reasoned in this way forgot the people, or rather never considered them as a factor. A new force was arising in the world, — that of the people, of democracy, the force of the future; and it was with this that kings and ministers had to reckon, and not with

that of the past, the force of aristocracy. This new element was moving restlessly and unceasingly; but the question was, When and where would it be called out? If George III. had confined his work to England, it would sooner or later have sprung into life there, and would have fought its battle at once instead of advancing slowly and in more wholesome fashion for nearly a century. But this was not to be. The English revolution of the eighteenth century was destined to be precipitated and fought out in a new world, where the first great uprising of the English people had done so much to plant the germs of powerful states. If a revolution in England had not anticipated that in America, the colonies would sooner or later have come within the scope of George's policy, which derived its strength from the condition of English politics and society. That the provinces were the first to come into conflict with the king was largely due to chance. The close of the French war revealed to politicians — among whom the greed for money was the paramount consideration — thirteen rich, growing, and vigorous commonwealths, of which, thanks to the wisdom of Sir Robert Walpole, they had previously known little or nothing. They saw at a glance that the colonies were very loosely governed and very lightly taxed. An enchanting vista of sinecures and revenue was thus opened before them, and to the honest, narrow-minded George Grenville a fine opportunity was presented for improved administration and, as a necessary consequence, ignorant meddling. The Stamp Act fol-

lowed, and there was an explosion of resistance from one end of America to the other, which ought to have been a lesson sufficiently strong to have made the revolution impossible. The Rockingham Whigs repealed the Stamp Act; but like many other excellent and well-meaning men they proved to be weak as well as good, and they pacified themselves and Parliament by declaring that they had the right to do that which they dared not undertake. They salved the wound, but left the sting behind. Sustained by the declaratory act, men who had none of the liberal views or constitutional principles of the Whigs took up the policy of taxation and interference. There is no need to trace the progress of this policy. Each step on the part of England was marked by deeper folly than its predecessor, until at last the crisis came, and the tea of the East India Company floated in Boston harbor. George III. thoroughly supported, of course, the policy of more government and more interference; but his profound interest was not awakened until he was met by forcible opposition. Boston had openly resisted the power of the crown and the power of Parliament, which the king was absorbing; and this resistance must be crushed. Whether George III. saw his opportunity to repeat the policy of Strafford with a better issue may be doubted; but there can be no question that the tendency of the two schemes was identical, and that a victorious army, largely composed of mercenaries returning from the conquest of the colonies, would have been a fearful menace to England.

At all events, war was pushed on, and the world knows what came of it. George III. selected the very worst part of his dominions in which to bring his plans to a practical test. In America he had to deal, not with a weakened aristocracy and a corrupt House of Commons, nor with a rich and extravagant society, but with a simple, frugal, hardy people, neither very rich nor very poor, free from traditions and uncontaminated by the vices of Europe. He was supported in his enterprise by the great mass of his people at home, both high and low; and there is nothing so instructive, in regard to the period described by Mr. Trevelyan, as the attitude of the people, and especially the ruling classes, of England toward the colonies. They saw neither art, literature, nor great individual wealth in America; and it was assumed that the colonists were therefore poor, ignorant, and sordid. They utterly failed to see that the average of education in the colonies by any standard of that day was high; and they found out only by hard experience that the Americans were keen politicians, thoroughly versed in constitutional principles, and capable of parliamentary debate and of state papers beyond anything which could be produced at that moment by an English ministry. But of all their blunders the most imbecile and fatuous was the assumption that the Americans, that the Virginian gentlemen and the New England descendants of the Roundheads, would not fight; that they were cowards. Lord Sandwich, perhaps the most contemptible of all the contemptible men then

in public life, gave utterance to this profound sentiment, and there is every reason to suppose that it met with general concurrence. Ignorance of other people and arrogance toward them have been responsible for almost all the misfortunes and errors of England, but they never cost her so much as in 1776.

There was, too, a fatal defect in George's policy. It had in English society an excellent field for work; but the very condition of the times gave it no fit material for the execution of schemes of war and conquest. The war itself is another vigorous commentary on the condition of England. The recently published contemporary history of the Revolution, by a New York Tory, who sacrificed everything, including high judicial office, to his loyalty, tells the story. The author attacks his rebel countrymen; but his bitterest revilings are reserved for the English armies and generals. The Americans put at their head one of the greatest statesmen and generals that the world has ever seen. The English sent Gage, Howe, Clinton, Burgoyne, and Cornwallis to fight their battles and defeat George Washington. Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, and John Jay represented the colonies abroad; but the names of the Englishmen who were to counteract their diplomacy are forgotten. There is no need to pursue the comparison. It is always the same story.

The revolution which had been preparing in England burst in America; and England was saved from George III., from the schemes of prerogative, and perhaps from civil war. The surrender at Yorktown

brought the fall of Lord North. The Rockingham Whigs came into power; but they were too weak, their day had passed, and the death of Lord Rockingham, with some justice called a "poor creature" by the ever genial Horace Walpole, was enough to shatter them. There was a vigorous effort for reform, for the storm of the American war cleared the air; but it failed. Then came the infamous coalition, and George III., helpless before an "arrangement" which he had thought to have made impossible, under the guidance of Pitt, appealed at last to the people. This was the finishing stroke of the revolution. George III. and the coalition in reality fell together, and the history of England began to flow in new channels; checked and impeded and of sluggish current at first, but moving steadily in harmony with the democratic tendencies of the age. The great questions underlying all are why George III. could try such a policy with a prospect of success; and why the inevitable and needed change came by a revolution so sweeping that it cost England thirteen colonies, millions of treasure, and a glory which a few years before had dazzled the world. The answers are well given by Mr. Trevelyan in his picture of the early days of Fox.

WILLIAM COBBETT.

It is rather surprising that the recent biography of William Cobbett[1] should have attracted apparently so little attention in this country. Cobbett not only had a very remarkable and interesting life, but he also played an important, though well-nigh forgotten, part in early American politics. He was one of the founders of our party press, and by far the ablest; and his brief but stormy career in Philadelphia casts a strong side-light upon the politics of the day and the history of the time. But a much broader and deeper interest is attached to Cobbett in another way. He was, in his way, the "abstract and brief chronicle" of the violent controversies engendered by the French Revolution, of the forces which that mighty convulsion let loose, and of the consequent struggles and changes produced in England. Cobbett was essentially and in every respect a typical and representative man. He was the type of the mass of Englishmen, the exponent of a great social and political conflict, and the representative of the passions, hopes, and aspirations which agitated the English people at the beginning of the nineteenth century. There have been many great

[1] *William Cobbett: A Biography.* By Edward Smith. 1878.

men at all stages of the world's history, but very few thoroughly representative men on the largest scale. As a rule, indeed, no one very great man is representative. The fact of his genius, of his ability to do great deeds and forecast the future, raises him so far above his fellow-men that, however much he may understand his time and the people about him, he fails to represent or, more exactly, to reproduce them. Napoleon was a man of almost unbounded genius, yet he was not representative except in a very limited way. William Cobbett had strong natural abilities, but he was no genius; and nevertheless he was thoroughly and completely representative. His fame rests upon the extent of his constituency and his faithful reproduction of their ideas and wishes; and it is in this capacity that he acquires historical importance.

There has never been a man for whose biography more abundant materials existed. His success, acting upon an impulsive and vigorous nature and a half-educated mind, produced a most intense egotism. He was so deeply impressed by his own career, and by the obstacles he had overcome through dogged persistence and sheer force of character, that he firmly believed nothing to be more generally interesting or more deeply instructive than the incidents of his life. His favorite subject, therefore, was his own biography, which he was continually writing and publishing, either entire or in detached fragments. He has, in consequence, left a portrait of himself as he seemed to himself, which is unequaled in vividness and fullness

of detail. We know just what he thought, said, and did at every moment of his eventful history, and are thus enabled to draw a picture of the man, very different from his own, it is true, but which is probably more accurate.

The description which Lord St. Leonards gave of himself when he told his constituents that he had, "like themselves, sprung from the dregs of the people," would hardly be applicable to Cobbett, but the parentage of the future agitator was certainly very humble. Cobbett's grandfather was a day-laborer, and his father a small farmer; and yet, although his immediate ancestry was obscure, he could boast that he was the pure-blooded descendant of a mighty line. He belonged to the great family of the common people of England, and was a thorough Saxon in every nerve and fibre. Those men were his ancestors whose bodies lay piled in a rampart round the dragon of Wessex when night fell upon the battle-field of Hastings, and he could claim descent from the bowmen whose arrow-flights had shattered the ranks of the French at Cressy, and resisted the charge of the French knighthood at Agincourt. A few generations later, and they were following Hampden to the field, and scattering the cavaliers at Marston Moor. They were the men who, as Macaulay says, "drove before them in headlong route the finest infantry of Spain." They built up Virginia in the wilderness, and followed Bradford and Winthrop to the rocks of New England.

It was the strong sense of the worth and glory of

the race and class to which he belonged which was the underlying principle of Cobbett's life, and no man had a better right to it. In every way he was typical, physically and mentally. The round, rosy, rather heavy face, the flaxen hair, the powerful and thick-set frame, the general air of hearty animal vigor, — all bespeak his nationality; and mind and character corresponded to the body which inclosed them. In every incident of Cobbett's life, the sturdy, stubborn persistence, the love of home and independence, the delight in fighting for fighting's sake, and the utter incapacity to recognize defeat, — all of which mark the Anglo-Saxon, — come out with wonderful clearness, and form a combination of qualities for which one may look in vain among other nations. Such a character has, of course, grave defects. Its possessors are apt to be narrow, slow of perception, brutal at times, and neither adaptable nor adroit. But it is preëminently a character of force, fitted for conquest, government, and freedom; and its results can be estimated by the place which the English speech and the English race hold to-day in the world, and by the magnitude of the states they have erected and the wealth and power they control.

William Cobbett was born in Surrey in the year 1762, and there his early years were passed. He followed the plow, worked in the fields, became a gardener's lad, and led a wholesome rustic life. A large part of his education was in the training of eye and ear, of hand and body, which an active country

life alone affords. It was a bringing up to which he always looked back with pride and gratitude, and he tells its story in a blunt, denunciatory, egotistic fashion so characteristic of himself that it merits quotation. He is speaking, late in life, of a sand-hill in the neighborhood of his home, down the steep sides of which he and his brothers were wont to roll: "This was the spot where I was receiving my education; and this was the sort of education. And I am perfectly satisfied that if I had not received such an education, or something very much like it, — that if I had been brought up a milksop, with a nursery maid everlastingly at my heels, — I should have been at this day as great a fool, as inefficient a mortal, as any of those frivolous idiots that are turned out from Winchester and Westminster School, or from any of those dens of dunces called colleges and universities. It is impossible to say how much I owe to that sand-hill; and I want to return it my thanks for the ability which it probably gave me to be one of the greatest terrors to one of the greatest and most powerful bodies of knaves and fools that ever were permitted to afflict this or any other country."

But, underneath this physical and moral training, a mental education was also in progress. In rude and broken fashion Cobbett acquired the rudiments of learning, and the ability to read brought an intense craving for information to an unusually active intellect. The power of the inborn love of books and knowledge has rarely had a more striking example than when Cobbett, a tired plowboy, expended his

last pennies in purchasing the "Tale of a Tub," and went hungry to bed under a haystack after reading his dearly-bought treasure as long as daylight lasted. But when the gates of knowledge were once thrown open, Cobbett's restless energy broke forth, and he chafed sorely at the narrowness of rural existence. He sought his fortune in London, and, moved by his strong love of country, tried in vain to enter the navy, and later, with better success, enlisted in the army. For eight years he served as a soldier, rising by steadiness, sobriety, and application to the highest grade of non-commissioned officers. Neither hardship, incessant drill, low company, nor miserable pay could daunt his untiring industry. He perfected himself in grammar, made himself a master of his own language, and read many books. In the army, too, he obtained his first and most painful insight into the corruption, inefficiency, and favoritism which then degraded and disgraced every branch of the English service, civil and military. He gave in his own person the best proof of the low condition of affairs, for he gradually drew to himself all the various duties of administration pertaining to his superiors, who were too grossly ignorant and incompetent to perform them. The sense of his own capacity thus acquired, mingled with contempt and indignation at the system which put his inferiors above him, turned him from a soldier into a reformer of vested abuses. At the end of eight years he resigned, returned to England, married, and prepared to put in execution a long-deferred plan for the

exposure and punishment of certain officers of high rank. His case was without a flaw; but he knew little of the world, and still less of the power of the evil which he aimed to redress. He was put off, deluded, and ill-treated, until his efforts for reform seeming only to promise his own ruin he fled to France, and abandoned his first assault in despair.

From France, after a short sojourn, he emigrated to the United States, and in the year 1792 established himself at Wilmington, and soon after at Philadelphia, as a teacher of English. The demand for such instruction and the character of his pupils show curiously the condition of the time. His scholars were French émigrés, and Cobbett found himself in the midst of the agitation which the events in Paris had started in the United States. For some time he quietly attended to his work of teaching and translating, and wrote an English grammar for the use of Frenchmen, which, for practical purposes, has seldom been surpassed. But, as the combat thickened, the innate love of fighting and the strong, conservative English hatred of the atrocities in Paris asserted themselves, and Cobbett rushed into the fray. His first theme was the reception given to Dr. Priestley on his arrival in New York. This pamphlet was entitled "Observations on Dr. Priestley's Emigration," and was simply a powerful invective against the French Revolution. "System-mongers," says Cobbett, "are an unreasonable species of mortals; time, place, climate, Nature itself, must give way. They must have the same

governments in every quarter of the globe, when, perhaps, there are not two countries which can possibly admit of the same form of government at the same time. . . . Even supposing his [Dr. Priestley's] intended plan of improvement had been the best in the world, the people of England had certainly a right to reject it. He claims, as an indubitable right, the right of thinking for *others;* and yet he will not permit the people of England to think for *themselves.* . . . If the English choose to remain slaves, bigots, and idolaters, as the Doctor calls them, that was no business of his; he had nothing to do with them. He should have let them alone, and perhaps in due time the abuses of their government would have come to that 'natural termination' which he trusts 'will guard against future abuses.' But no, said the Doctor, 'I will reform you; I will enlighten you; I will make you free!' 'You shall not!' say the people. 'But I will!' says the Doctor. 'By ——,' say the people, 'you shall not!' '*And when Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he saddled his ass, and arose, and got him home to his house and his city, and put his household in order, and hanged himself and died; and was buried in the sepulchre of his fathers.*' "

The argument might be illogical, but the pamphlet had an unmistakable power, and there could be no doubt at all as to the plain, nervous style, the simple English, and the robust sense of the writer. The sale of the pamphlet was immediate and large, and Cobbett's future course was open before him. His

peculiar fitness for rough conflict was obvious, and his career as a popular political controversialist began. Pamphlet followed pamphlet; then came his reports of the doings of Congress, and finally "Porcupine's Gazette." Thus Cobbett was fairly embarked upon the stormy sea of newspaper controversy. The field had been occupied first by the "Aurora," which under the guidance of Bache and Duane had for some time a monopoly of partisan attacks, and much the advantage of the defenders of the government, so far as the power of the press was concerned. All this was changed by the appearance of Cobbett. The question of revolution and anti-revolution principles had gradally resolved itself into the more concrete form of England and France, and the strict neutrality of the government had led to violent abuse of all the members of the administration, including Washington, as partisans of the hated mother country. A bold man was needed to combat the popular prejudices, but Cobbett was fully equal to the emergency. He not only supported the administration measures, the neutrality policy, and the Jay treaty, but he even dared to defend England as against France. The rage of the opposition thus confronted knew no bounds. Mobs and libel suits were among the rewards of the hardy Englishman; but he also gained the support and countenance of a powerful and energetic party among the ultra-Federalists, to whom he rendered efficient aid, although it must be admitted he ultimately injured their cause by his extreme opinions. In Cobbett the ga-

zettes of the Democracy and of the French sympathizers found a foeman who overcame them with their own weapons, and in this wild turmoil the party press of the United States came into being. There is a common and generally wholesome inclination in man to be *laudator temporis acti*, and this is especially strong in regard to a period which by the talents of the actors and the magnitude of their achievements is confessedly great, — as was in a marked degree the case with the United States in the years subsequent to the adoption of the Federal Constitution. But in respect to our newspaper press there has been a great and marked improvement. This applies, not merely to news and to the quality of writing, but still more to the general tone of discussion. The gazettes of Cobbett's time were wholly given over to political controversy of the most personal and savage kind. Abuse and scurrility are, unfortunately, not wanting to-day in our journals, and in certain semi-civilized regions of the South and West they probably do not fall far behind their predecessors of 1795 in these undesirable qualities. But Cobbett and his adversaries wrote for and edited the metropolitan press of the time; and it may be safely said that in no respectable newspaper in any large city now can such virulent and unmeasured vituperation be often found as was daily spread before the readers of the journals which attempted to guide public opinion in this country at the close of the last century and the beginning of this. Here, for instance, is a remark made upon one of Cobbett's early pamphlets: "Na-

ture must have had the hysterics when you were born; mastiffs howled, and owls sang anthems to congratulate you into existence, and your jaws must have been furnished with indissoluble tusks, expressive of the disposition that was inspired within you." He was habitually denounced as a rogue, a deserter from the army, a thief, a forger, and a garret scribbler. Tar and feathers were frequently threatened in order to send him howling back to England, while a very favorite method of assault was to describe elaborately the whippings he had received. Even his wife was not spared in the general abuse but was mentioned in the plainest terms as one of the vilest of her sex. A constant charge was to the effect that he was a hireling of Pitt, and a receiver of British gold, — an accusation which stung Cobbett to the quick, and led him to publish a careful and conclusive reply; but he generally satisfied himself by counter-assaults. At the time of Randolph's trouble, and his so-called "vindication," Cobbett says of the Democrats: "They have had address sufficient to stir the mob to burn the greatest part of the Federal senators in effigy; they have dared publicly and vilely to traduce the President of the United States; their own president has been elected a member of the legislature of Pennsylvania; the legislature of Virginia has declared in their favor; and a fresh importation of thieves and traitors from Ireland is daily expected to arrive. These are great and solid advantages." Here is another retort: "The enemies of the President of the

United States, and of the Federal government, pretend to be affronted that a man born in England should presume to say a civil thing of the character of George Washington. The consistency of this will appear when the public are assured that very few of the abusive scribblers who slander his reputation have one drop of American blood in their veins." He concluded in the following manner a prolonged controversy with his first publisher and other antagonists: "I now take leave of the Bradfords, and of all those who have written against me. People's opinions must now be made up concerning them and me. Those who still believe the lies that they have vomited forth against me are either too stupid or too perverse to merit further attention. I will, therefore, never write another word in reply to anything that is published about myself. Bark away, hell-hounds, until you are suffocated in your own foam! Your labors are preserved, bound up together in a piece of bear-skin with the hair on, and nailed up to a post in my shop, where whoever pleases may read them gratis."

Cobbett was more than a match for his opponents individually and collectively. He was fully as coarse as they and much more original and racy, with a far better command of language and no mean capacity for very telling satire. He was, too, perfectly fearless and wholly unrestrained, either by the terrors of the mob or the law. It was a mere question of time, of course, how soon he got into the courts. The first attempt, stimulated by Chief Justice McKean, was made to in-

dict him for a libel on Yrujo, the Spanish minister; but the grand jury threw out the bill. Not long after, however, another attack was more successful. Dr. Rush advocated, during the prevalence of the yellow fever, the practice of unlimited bleeding, and Cobbett not only assailed him in his usual unmeasured fashion, but succeeded in making the worthy physician, who was then at the head of his profession in Philadelphia, extremely ridiculous. Justly incensed, Dr. Rush brought an action of libel, and the jury awarded him damages to the amount of five thousand dollars. This and the expenses of the trial nearly ruined Cobbett, who took his departure for New York, reopened his shop, and attempted once more to start his gazette. He published also a newspaper entitled the "Rush-light," devoted to his controversy with the Doctor, which shows rather strikingly the interest that he and his affairs excited in the popular mind. Nevertheless, the pecuniary blow and the defeat in the courts were too much for him, and in June, 1800, he returned to England.

Mr. Smith, Cobbett's biographer, represents his hero as the champion of the liberty of the press in the United States, and takes great exception also to the popular prejudice against him on account of his being an Englishman. Both the opinion and the criticism are unfounded and wrong. As to the first point, it should be remembered that mobs and libel suits were then the recognized method of meeting political attacks in the press, and on the only occasion when Cobbett

was actually brought before the courts on a political charge the jury threw out the bill. In the case of Dr. Rush the libel suit was perfectly proper, and would be so to-day; and the fact that Cobbett was right on a point of medical practice, and the Doctor wrong, does not touch the question in the least. Broken windows and public prosecutions are rude methods of conducting political discussions, but they were everywhere fashionable in the eighteenth century and were particularly so in London. They certainly did not restrain Cobbett's freedom of speech materially, and he was but one of many who defied them, and paved the way for their disuse. Cobbett, indeed, suffered far less than his opponents; and the scurrilous Callender, who went to prison for his famous and abusive "Prospect before us," really endured much more than Cobbett in behalf of what Mr. Smith styles the "liberty of the Press."

That Cobbett should have been disliked because he was an Englishman was, under the circumstances, not only natural but proper. No people with an ounce of self-respect care to be lectured daily by a foreigner about their own affairs; and Cobbett not only did this, but he refused to be naturalized, and dinned into the public ear the fact that he was an Englishman, and proposed to remain so. This conduct rightly diminished his influence, which was a misfortune to all, and especially to the party he supported and to which he proved, at times, a very dangerous ally. It is as a founder of our party press, and as an exponent of our party politics at a momentous period, that Cobbett ac-

quires interest and importance as a figure in American history, and not as the champion of free speech. The manner, matter, and method of his controversies are very striking and suggestive, and exhibit in a strong light the deep political enmities of the day and the crude forms of popular discussion then in vogue. That Cobbett rendered yeoman's service to a sound policy and a great administration in trying times entitles him to a special debt of gratitude, and must always be unquestioned; but it is much to be regretted that he acted throughout as an Englishman, and that the ablest newspaper support received by the Federalists was not above the reproach justly leveled at the Democratic journals, that they were managed and edited by foreign adventurers.

Cobbett turned his back on America with a heart full of bitterness, and with deep curses upon all Republics, ancient and modern, and his reception in England, while it confirmed all these prejudices, did much to allay the smart of the losses to which he had been subjected in the United States. He found himself welcomed by Mr. Pitt and by all the leaders of the Tory aristocracy. His services in alienating the United States from France, and in sustaining the English cause, received prompt and hearty recognition, which so touched him that he enlisted at once under the Tory standard as one of the followers of the "heaven-born" statesman. It was an ill-assorted alliance, for except a hatred of Bonaparte and the French Revolution, Cobbett had nothing in common with the

Tory aristocracy, and the combination of two such discordant elements could not and did not last long. The peace of Amiens parted the slender ties, and Cobbett drifted over to the Whigs, and finally settled down to what was his real work, — domestic reform. "The Political Register" became a power in the land, and in season and out of season Cobbett poured forth, in nervous English, one attack after the other upon the unreformed Parliament, the corrupt civil service, the waste and extravagance, the sinecures, the placemen, the game laws, and the income of the Church. Through that long and arduous struggle it would be impossible to follow him without tracing the history of England for the first thirty years of this century. The ultra-Federalist and conservative of America became the radical whose name was a by-word in England. He was fined and imprisoned by one Tory government, he was driven into exile in the United States by another, and he was finally brought into court on a charge of libel by the Whigs. His life was one incessant conflict; but the wonderful pluck of the man and his utter inability to recognize defeat came out after each struggle more vital than before. With each successive year he was reaching out farther among the people, and opening their eyes more and more to the oppression and misgovernment under which they labored. Leading articles in his newspaper, pamphlets, books, letters, and addresses flowed from his pen, possessed apparently of an absolutely inexhaustible fertility. He spoke at last to the whole body of

the English common people, not as a master, but as one in full sympathy, who had himself their thoughts and aspirations, who saw with their eyes and felt their burdens on his own shoulders. At last the triumph came. The reform for which Cobbett gave the prime of his life and powers was brought to pass in 1832; and its great champion, the man who had cried for it during the lifetime of a generation, was returned to the new Parliament. His career as a legislator was not distinguished. He was a patient and useful member, but he was too old to adapt himself to the new sphere. The late sittings and the confined life told upon his health, and three years after the "famous victory" he died. The seat in Parliament was a fit reward and an appropriate close to his labors, for his presence at Westminster, with his opinions unaltered, showed the change that had been wrought and the work that had been done in England, and they were due in large measure to the steady assaults of the Surrey plowboy.

The most interesting lesson of this remarkable career, crowned as it was with such complete triumph, lies in the methods used by Cobbett, and the objects at which he aimed. Bitterly as he hated the French Revolution, he was himself an exponent of the social and political forces which gave it birth, and which agitated the whole western world. He was a leader in the great democratic movement which then began its rapid march, and which has been sweeping resistlessly onward ever since. The England of Cobbett's time

was the Eldonian England, the paradise of the few as opposed to the well-being of the many; and the few very naturally and very wisely clung to their privileges, and offered a firm resistance to every change. They were formidable and determined adversaries, and they held their own against the current of the times for forty years. Cobbett was the champion of the masses against the aristocracy. He was, moreover, sprung from the people, and he is one of the very few really great popular leaders of whom this can be said. The professional agitators and the fomenters of popular discontent are, as a rule, men from the upper ranks, who have been rejected by their natural allies, and who are only too often vengeful, deceitful, and self-seeking. Cobbett was not only one of the class that he led, but what is far more extraordinary he was not a demagogue, but was from the beginning to the end wholly independent and perfectly disinterested. He never pandered to the people, he never stirred up their passions to serve his own ambition; and he had also in ample measure the inborn conservatism of his race. He never advocated a change for its own sake, but was always able and ready to prove its practical advantages. But his thoroughly English nature showed itself still more strongly in another way. He always declared that he not only admired and loved the British constitution, but that his one object was not to innovate but to reform. He aimed to bring back the government to the original model and purpose from which it had gradually drifted. In other words, his theory

was to restore the political fabric to its ancient form, and not to destroy what was old in order to replace it with something new. This theory is unquestionably a fiction historically. Reform was innovation. But the doctrine represents one of the soundest principles that any people can possess. When the Long Parliament, at open war with the king, still continued to use the phrase of "King and Parliament," and assailed "his majesty's evil counsellors" and not Charles Stuart himself, they were indulging in what was pure fiction so far as facts went. But this clinging to usages and phrases and theories, this very contradiction between words and deeds, typifies the slow temperament, the law-abiding and law-loving character, and the almost blind attachment to precedent which prove the political wisdom of the race. These are the qualities which have made the English a great political and governing people, and which divide them from the nations of Europe; and it was with this spirit that Cobbett was wholly filled. There never was a time when he would have admitted for an instant that he sought for something new. That the constitution had been distorted and abused, and that his object was simply to restore it to its primitive excellence and purity, was not only his constant declaration but his rooted conviction; and it was this belief which made his career honorable and his efforts successful.

Cobbett's courage, patriotism, independence, and singleness of heart and purpose are obvious at a glance; and so are his faults, for there is nothing intricate or subtle about the man. His low beginnings,

his half-education, his wonderful success, and the intoxication of unbounded popular influence developed an egotism that was simply colossal. It is not offensive, for it is so gigantic, so simple, and so apparent that no one can be angered by it. But, united as it was with a hot head and an impetuous disposition, it made Cobbett not only impracticable in the active management of affairs, but utterly unable to work with others. He quarreled with every one with whom he came in contact, whenever there was any question of leadership or difference of views. He would never sacrifice an opinion or alter a plan.

"As Alexander he would reign, and he would reign alone."

This inability to deal with his fellow-men warped his character and diminished his usefulness, or rather confined it to the one field where it was much better that he should act alone and upon his own unaided judgment.

Lord Dalling, in his very clever sketch of Cobbett as the "contentious man," censures with great severity his inconsistency, and his latest biographer deems it necessary to defend him from this charge. The accusation is a misconception, the defense superfluous. When the Abbé Sieyès was asked what he did during the reign of terror, he replied, "J'ai vécu," — and the exploit was one of which any man might well be proud. To have been politically consistent in England during the era of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars would be as great a boast; and we

have never wondered at Lord Eldon's delight when the mob cried out, "There 's old Eldon! He never ratted." Consistency at that period, besides being a doubtful virtue, was a great rarity; and to a man like Cobbett it was a simple impossibility, — a fetter which would have hindered his movements and lessened his usefulness, so that the want of it is no ground whatever for reproach. He was always in the thickest of the fight, always tossing on the stormy seas of public opinion; and he could not do otherwise than alter his course from time to time in order to attain his objects. At the same time he never lost sight of the beacon-light for which he steered; he never trimmed his sail to secure personal benefits; and in his devotion to what he believed to be the welfare of England and of the English people there was consistency of the best sort.

The fate of his writings is in some ways peculiar. No author was ever more prolific or more widely read during his lifetime, and yet everything that Cobbett published has passed into complete oblivion. His newspaper articles, his pamphlets, and his books are all alike unread and forgotten. This fact, however, is one which hardly needs explanation. Cobbett was not a literary man; he was a political agitator, he wrote exclusively upon the topics of the day, and his pen was simply a weapon. His productions, therefore, have no present or permanent interest; and if they had not been ephemeral, but had been composed for posterity, they would not have answered their purpose. In two respects, however, Cobbett's writings have and always will have a lasting value. They are

indispensable historical documents, for they throw a vivid light upon every passing event and upon every change of public opinion, and the history of the time cannot be written or understood without their aid. They have, besides, genuine literary merit. As a writer Cobbett belongs to the school of Swift, for whose "Tale of a Tub" he sacrificed his supper; but he is far from being Swift's equal, for the Dean was a great genius and Cobbett was not. The pupil has neither the refinements of style nor the keenness of satire for which the master is still preëminent. But Cobbett possessed in ample measure Swift's simplicity of diction and strength of phrase, and he used pure Saxon to an extent and with a power which is well worth study at the present day. The great superiority of a plain nervous English style in argument of any sort, and above all in political controversy, although sufficiently demonstrated by the "Drapier's Letters," receives ample confirmation in the writings of Cobbett. Both Swift and Cobbett far surpass Junius, despite the pointed and poisoned sentences and the attractive mystery which has done so much for the anonymous writer.

It is not, however, as an author that Cobbett will take his place in history. It is as the typical Englishman of the revolutionary epoch, as the founder of the reform movement, as the friend of liberty and good government, and above all as the true and thorough representative of the English common people in a time of great stress and trial, that he will be held in deserved remembrance.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

"ORATOR, Writer, Soldier, Jurist, Financier," are the words engraved upon the monument in Boston raised to the memory of Alexander Hamilton. False as monumental inscriptions proverbially are, few persons would deny that Hamilton may justly claim distinction under all the titles in this imposing list. How much and how high the distinction he attained in these several capacities are the only questions to be settled, but the answers may well tax severely the strongest and clearest judgment. Tradition says that in the bitterness of personal and political conflict one of Hamilton's chief enemies declared that "he never could see what there was in that little West Indian";[1] while his other great opponent, possessing a far keener insight into human nature, pronounced him "really a Colossus to the anti-Republican party."[2] Public opinion to-day might not coincide exactly with either estimate, but would certainly more nearly approach the latter than the former. But with whatever views or with whatever prejudices one comes to the study of Hamilton's career, it is no easy matter to write his life. To analyze Hamilton's character is the simplest

[1] John Adams.

[2] Thomas Jefferson : Letter to Madison, *Works*, vol. iv. p. 121.

part of such an undertaking. His was not a complex nature, and like many great men, especially those of strongly masculine qualities, the mental lines are clear, direct, and easily followed. The first difficulty is to estimate his worth and the measure of his success in the many fields of human intelligence which he entered, for of all the leaders of our versatile people, no one except Franklin has displayed so much versatility as Hamilton. The ability to appreciate and properly criticise him, under all aspects and in all his varying pursuits, demands a breadth of knowledge, a liberality of education, and a strength of mental grasp which are by no means common. Yet the second difficulty, which arises in considering Hamilton's outside relations with the men and circumstances by which he was surrounded, is far greater than the first. Not only did Hamilton formulate and carry through a policy which gave existence to our government, and take a principal part against the opposition thus aroused, but his history fairly bristles with controversies and is inextricably interwoven with bitter personal quarrels. No biographer has an easy task, but Mr. Morse has selected one of peculiar difficulty.[1] The "Life of Hamilton," by his son, is but a fragment which stops short of the great period in his career; and the subsequent work by the same author is not a life but a history, and one so detailed as to be useless except to specialists. There was nothing to be undone, and no

[1] *The Life of Alexander Hamilton.* By John T. Morse, Jr. Boston, 1876.

bad work to be done over again. Mr. Morse, therefore, had the advantage of a clear field in which there was no predecessor. To be so situated is fortunate, but the position is one which greatly increases responsibility. To err in an attempt to correct old errors is far better than to propagate wholly new ones. To fail in repairing work already done is a less evil than bad and insufficient construction where nothing has been accomplished. In the one case the matter can hardly be worse than it was before; in the other errors are sown in fresh soil, and on the future historian devolves the disagreeable and difficult task of exposing and destroying them.

To but few men has the power been given to write, in the highest sense of the words, a history at once scientific and popular; and the same is true in a still greater degree, perhaps, of biographies. A few "Lives" have satisfied the demands of the student and historian as well as those of the general public, but they are landmarks in literature which occupy a great and singularly lonely eminence. Between the perfect and the wholly bad there is of course a wide range, and perhaps in regard to some works time alone, not the contemporaneous critic, can decide whether they have or have not elements of permanent interest.

Mr. Morse has given us a very readable and popular "Life of Hamilton." This may be fairly conceded, and for this we are duly grateful. It is well that the life of such a man should be put into an accessible form. To write a purely popular book thoroughly

well, moreover, is by no means easy; and yet to say even this of any new book is but scant praise, with which no author ought to be content. Mr. Morse certainly would not be satisfied by such a kind of patronage, for he has evidently tried to do much more than merely popularize. It is fairer and more profitable to look at the book as a whole, without taking it up in detail, and without pretending to weigh out applause here and blame there, or to make a cheap display of knowledge by burrowing after blunders. We can best judge of Mr. Morse's work by briefly examining the character and career of his hero.

Hamilton's precocity was very striking, even in an age and country remarkable for precocious men. When only fourteen years old he conducted, in the absence of his employer, the complicated and quite extensive business of a West India merchant. At eighteen years, while still a college student, he wrote two of the most successful controversial political pamphlets which appeared at a time when that form of agitation was used by the ablest men, and when there were not only vigorous enemies to be encountered, but eager and friendly rivals to be surpassed. At the same age he had the courage to address excited public meetings, and to restrain by cool arguments, at the risk of his life, the frenzies of the mob. It is very significant that a boy of that age, slight in stature, and a stranger in the land, should have been able, on such occasions, to speak successfully. But the hurried march of revolution quickly presented opportuni-

ties more tempting to a man of his temperament than college studies or political controversy. He laid aside the pen to take up the sword, and, after a year of efficient service at the head of the company he had raised, was picked out by Washington to serve as his confidential aide. Even at that early period of their friendship, Washington employed Hamilton to draft many of his important letters, and intrusted him with most delicate and trying missions. Nothing, however, in the intercourse of these two men during the revolution, nothing indeed in all Hamilton's career, gives such a vivid idea of his intellectual power as his quarrel with Washington in 1781. The whole affair, properly considered, is a very striking one, although Mr. Morse apparently regards it merely as an obvious and trifling disagreement. Such it was on the surface; but if examined carefully, with due regard to the characters of the participants, it is full of meaning. The quarrel has now become famous and its outlines are simple. The young aide kept his general waiting, or at least the latter thought so, and reproved him for his delay with some asperity. Whereupon the young gentleman drew himself up and said they must part. In explanation of his conduct he wrote the well-known letter to Schuyler in which he expressed general disapproval of Washington's personal address, manners, and temper. Washington, on the other hand, made an immediate overture towards reconciliation, which was rejected by Hamilton, who, having at a subsequent period got

over his bad temper, applied to Washington for assistance. Washington at once received him kindly, and their friendship was never again interrupted. What is the true explanation of this singular action? Hamilton's part is easily accounted for. He was hot-tempered and self-asserting, and the tone of his letter, as well as the cold-blooded manner in which he used the pretext afforded by this trivial disagreement in order to quit what he chose to consider an inferior position, do not place him in a very amiable light. Washington's conduct is more difficult to understand. He had spoken sharply, as he had a perfect right to do, to a tardy aide-de-camp. Yet he put himself to some trouble and to some sacrifice of personal feeling to conciliate a proud, overbearing boy. The picture of Washington, before whose very glance so hardy a man as Gouverneur Morris is said to have shrunk away abashed, faced by an angry stripling whom he afterwards sought to appease, is an extraordinary one. Such a course seems to admit of but one solution. Washington in this instance appears, not as the great man who sees and acknowledges a wrong, for he had committed none, but as the wise man who declines for a trivial gratification to drive a friend of force and ability into revolt. This view can add nothing to our admiration of Washington's judgment, but it is of value in appreciating the mastering power of Hamilton's mind at that early period, and there is no other incident which shows so clearly the impression he produced on his contemporaries.

Mr. Morse has passed lightly over Hamilton's military career, and in so doing has acted wisely. The revolutionary period is the most picturesque part of our history. Every actor in it is known, and every battle-field familiar. To describe Hamilton's mission to Gates, his conduct at Monmouth, his reception of D'Estaing, is not necessary. Nor need his biographer quote the vigorous yet pathetic description of the flight of Arnold and the execution of André, for this has become classic. Still less is it needful to detail the attack at Yorktown. Americans know well how Hamilton led his countrymen across the abattis and captured in nine minutes one of the British redoubts whose fellow occupied our French allies half an hour. The merest outline of Hamilton's military career is all-sufficient. His services and successes were those of an ardent young man, full of courage and ability; but his zeal has induced many persons to greatly overestimate his love of military life. To a mind like his, strong, energetic, executive, and systematic, a military life offered many attractions. He displayed all the necessary qualifications of a soldier, and gave promise of becoming, if the opportunity occurred, a successful general; but though his genius might have been forced by circumstances into this channel, it would never have turned there naturally. This is obvious from the fact that at no time during the war was utter absorption in military affairs characteristic of Hamilton. The letter to Duane, written at that period, on the formation of a stronger government, and the remarkable

essays on finance, addressed to Robert Morris, clearly show the bent of his mind. This army life had, however, an important effect in strengthening his natural tendencies. The miserable dissensions and ever-increasing impotence of Congress, its unworthy cabals against Washington, and its failure to perform its highest duties, all of which bore most hardly on the army, and were there most felt, filled Hamilton with a reasonable distrust and hatred of all weak popular governments. His efforts, while in Congress, in 1782–83, to provide for the debt, to pay off the soldiers, to secure proper garrisons by a new army, and to make public the debates of Congress, all proved fruitless, and served to deepen his already strong convictions. All his struggles came to nothing, and this drove him back from the hopeless task of legislation to the more congenial and profitable pursuit of his profession, which for the next five years he assiduously practiced. He had been admitted to the bar after a very hasty and necessarily inadequate preparation, but his great powers of acquisition and his eloquence raised him at once to eminence as a lawyer, and made him strong both with bench and jury. Hamilton's mind adapted itself readily to law. To say how good a common lawyer he was is at this day impossible, if one is obliged to rely solely on the arguments which have been preserved. These are too few in number to warrant a conclusion, but the question of contemporary opinion is easily settled. His success was immediate and brilliant, and from the

causes which he conducted it is clear that the first rank was conceded to him both by the profession and by the public. No one can say whether he was learned in the law, a scholar versed in the authorities; from his speedy preparation and the immediate rush of professional duties, the inference would be that he was not. He possessed, however, what is far more important in estimating his legal powers, the capacity in a high degree for pure, original, and sustained legal thought, and this is proved beyond a peradventure. If any one wishes to test this statement, let him study the numerous state papers in which Hamilton was called upon to deal with questions of international law. There is in them much learning, but, what is of infinitely more importance, there is the creative power, the evidence of a mind able not only to develop principles, but to apply them to facts. Still better proof is afforded by his discussion of points of constitutional law, the best example of which is to be found in his argument on the National Bank,[1] which can be submitted to the most severe of all tests, a close comparison with one of Marshall's. Let Hamilton's argument be read and then the decision in McCulloch *vs* Maryland.[2] This is not the place to discuss the constitutionality of that famous measure, but as a piece of legal reasoning the argument of the Secretary does not suffer when put side by side with the luminous decision of the Chief Justice. Mr. Webster

[1] *Hamilton's Works*, vol. iii. p. 106.

[2] 4 Wheaton, p. 316.

once said that when Marshall extended his forefinger and began, "It is conceded," he saw in anticipation all his favorite arguments falling helplessly to the ground. Hamilton produces the same sensation. If any one cares to try the experiment, in order to understand Marshall's greatness, let him endeavor to condense or confute one of his decisions. If any one doubts that Hamilton was a great lawyer, let him try the same experiment on his arguments. Success is no doubt possible in both cases; but I am sure that in either attempt a fair-minded man will become convinced of the greatness of his opponent. I am very far from meaning by this that Hamilton was the equal of Marshall as a lawyer, for I am aware of no one who has rivaled the Chief Justice; but that Hamilton was a great lawyer, and possessed a legal mind of the first order, is an opinion that admits of proof.

Toward the close of this first period of professional life Hamilton served in the New York Legislature, and the same ill success attended his efforts for better government there, as in Congress. At last, however, his exertions for a convention met with a response. He attended the preliminary meeting held at Annapolis, and drew up the address then issued, calling a convention of all the States at Philadelphia, and with great difficulty secured afterwards the appointment of representatives from New York to the constitutional convention. This delegation, of which he was a member, was so composed as to render him powerless, both his colleagues, Yates and Lansing, being Clintonians,

and strong state-rights men. Hamilton's position in the convention was, therefore, a wholly anomalous one, for the vote of his State was sure to be cast against every measure he favored. Mr. Morse has rightly described Hamilton's course in the convention as a purely independent one, and has not sought to make his efforts there the foundation of his reputation as the great supporter of the Constitution. Hamilton presented a plan differing from both those before the convention, and then withdrew, leaving his suggestions and arguments to do what good they might. His plan differed from the one finally adopted in only two essential particulars, — a Senate and President during good behavior, and the appointment of state governors by the central government. He returned to the convention only at its close, to use his personal influence in favor of the acceptance of the final draft. Hamilton's subsequent efforts to secure the adoption of the Constitution form his chief and truest claim to glory in this respect. Discussion of the merits or effects of the remarkable series of papers known as the "Federalist" would be superfluous. The greatest legal minds have set the seal of their approbation upon them; and in modern times, in the formation of a great empire, statesmen have turned to them and to their principal author as the preëminent authority on the subject of federation. The effect of these remarkable essays, in converting and forming public opinion, can hardly be overestimated; but Hamilton's most unalloyed triumph at this time, and one of the most brilliant of his

life, was his victory in the New York convention held to ratify the Constitution. Entering that convention in a small minority, faced by determined opponents led by men of first-rate ability, Hamilton ended by securing the adhesion of New York, — a matter at that time of vital importance to the new scheme. His speeches on this occasion afford an excellent insight into his mind, and enable the reader to understand his powers as an orator. One looks in vain in all he then said for those brilliant similes and those flights of the imagination which usually characterize oratory. Nowhere is there to be found an appeal to the emotions; there is not one passage intended to sway the hearts of men rather than their judgments. It is all pure reasoning and argument. And yet no one can read these speeches and not feel the mastering force of the great orator. How much more powerful must they have been to those who heard them, who could feel the influence of the earnest nature, who could see the light in the dark, deep-set eyes, and catch fire from the fervid temperament of him who so reasoned with them! It was the eloquence of reasoning, of arguments addressed to men's sober second thoughts, of demonstration of error and of the support of truth. In this most difficult path Hamilton succeeded. His speeches bore the severest of all tests, and passed triumphantly through the ordeal. It is almost a proverb that a measure is rarely carried by a speech; Hamilton not only won over votes, but actually converted a hostile majority into a favorable one. Unaided by popular

outcry, in a State where, on his own showing, four sevenths of the people were against him, by the strength of his arguments, by the splendor of his reasoning, he brought his opponents to his feet, confessing that he was right and they wrong. The long annals of English debate have few such purely intellectual triumphs to show.

With the victory in the New York convention the first period of Hamilton's life closes. Rich as it was in results, it was still richer in promise. To the second period belong the fruits of that promise, which have given Hamilton a place among the great men of his age and nation, and also the errors, the sometimes fatal errors, which marred the results of his achievements. To enter into an examination of Hamilton's course during this time, even were it as brief as that given to his early years, would be to write a history of the Federalist administrations. Criticism, therefore, must here be confined to the most salient features of the picture, in which two points stand out with great prominence; for they are the dramatic points in this period of Hamilton's life. I refer, of course, to the financial policy which gave existence to the government and created a great party in its support, and to the conduct which resulted in the ruin of the Federalists. Before entering upon this discussion it becomes necessary to say a few words as to the condition of affairs with which the new government was called to deal, and also upon the component parts of the administration.

The revolution, like all wars, especially all civil

wars, had unsettled society, and had given a great shock to political habits. In this instance it had done even more, by destroying one of the principal elements of society. The aristocratic, wealthy, and conservative class had been almost entirely swept away. The American Tories, who had formed a large portion of this class, had either emigrated or had withdrawn silently into obscurity to avoid public reproach and escape the mortification of being made to feel that their influence was utterly gone. One of the balance-wheels of society and politics had thus been destroyed and there had not been as yet sufficient time to replace it. The new democracy was moving along its destined path, but it had no checks; it lacked cohesion, and there was great danger that the victory of freedom would be lost in the anarchy of jarring states and by the destruction of the union on which national existence depended. Washington, Hamilton, and a few others here and there, had striven, apparently in vain, to stem the flood. But natural forces, stronger than any efforts individuals could make, were slow but sure allies, and in their operation made the Constitution a possibility. Time, of course, gave opportunity for the gradual re-formation of the conservative elements. New men who had acquired wealth, the remnants of the old Tory families, and intelligent and able men everywhere, now relieved from the stress of war, began again to come forward and to make their influence felt. This was, however, a very slow process, and alone would have been insufficient to produce a

change. Something stronger was needed, or the new conservatism would have perished in a general wreck. The requisite pressure came, however, very readily. Affairs under the confederation went on steadily from bad to worse. Congress sank into a state of hopeless decrepitude, and their committee appointed to take charge of the nation forsook its post and left the United States for more than six months at a time without any Federal head. The finances went utterly to rack and ruin. All the States, with few exceptions, engaged actively in the work of wholesale repudiation. Disintegration set in. The large States, in almost every instance, were threatened with dismemberment; and the smaller States contemplated withdrawal from the old confederation in order to form new ones. In Europe our position was pitiable and humiliating to the last degree. We had become a by-word and reproach in every mercantile community. Pitt refused to treat with us. Vergennes spoke of us with undisguised contempt; and all the Continental powers looked forward exultingly to our speedy ruin. Matters did not stop here. Disorder and repudiation were followed by general license and an outbreak of the communistic spirit. Insurrections began in various parts of the country, and finally culminated in the Shays Rebellion, in Massachusetts, which threatened extinction to such national government as still survived. Such a condition of affairs produced a violent reaction, which resulted in the adoption of the Constitution and the setting in motion of the new political

machinery. The experiment was to be made while the enemies of a strong central government were awed into silence by the disorders which had menaced the national life. The men who, afterwards, formed the Federalist party had achieved a victory, and made an attempt at government possible, but they entered upon their task while still a minority.

Washington was elected to the presidency as the choice of the whole people, and his wish was to govern in this sense and not as the leader of a party. With this desire he called to his administration the ablest men representing the opposing political elements. In short, Washington determined to try once more with a people of English race and a representative government the experiment of administration independent of party. In point of talent no such cabinet has ever been formed in this country, although the ability was chiefly confined to two men: the Secretaries of State and of the Treasury. Knox, the Secretary of War, was by no means the fool described by Jefferson, but he was not certainly a great statesman. A brave soldier, an honest and rather commonplace man, Knox is chiefly to be praised for the sense and fidelity with which he followed the lead of Hamilton and eschewed the counsels of Jefferson. Randolph, the Attorney General, was an abler man than Knox, but is very far from deserving the same amount of praise. He proved himself both vacillating and selfish, and although regarded by Hamilton as the blind follower of Jefferson, he was, nevertheless, a constant source of anx-

iety to the latter, who could never depend upon him. False to his supposed leader at this time, he subsequently betrayed his official trust and was unfaithful to Washington himself. Around the two principal secretaries gathered gradually the opposing political forces of the country. Except that they were both men of genius, two more totally different characters than the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury can hardly be conceived. Jefferson was a sentimentalist; a great man no doubt, but still a sentimentalist pure and simple. His colleague and opponent was the very reverse. Hamilton reasoned on everything, and addressed himself to the reason of mankind for his support. Jefferson rarely reasoned about anything, but appealed to men's emotions, to their passions, impulses, and prejudices, for sympathy and admiration. Hamilton, in common with all the leaders of his party, was, in practice, a poor judge of human nature; when he failed to convince he tried to control. Jefferson knew human nature, especially American human nature, practically, as no other man in this country has ever known it. He never convinced, he managed men; by every device, by every artifice and stage effect, by anything that could stir the emotions, he appealed to the people. As he was the first, so was he the greatest of our party leaders, and in this capacity no one has ever approached him. Hamilton was consistent, strong, masculine, and logical. Jefferson was inconsistent, supple, feminine, and illogical to the last degree. Yet these were the two

men whom Washington had joined with himself to conduct in harmony the administration of a representative government. That Washington, like William III., failed ultimately under such circumstances to carry on a non-partisan administration, is merely to say that he could not overcome the impossible. That he succeeded for four years in his attempt is simply amazing. If the violent extremes of thought and character represented by Hamilton and Jefferson be fairly considered and contrasted, and if it then be remembered that Washington held them together and made them work for the same ends and for the general good of the nation during four years, a conception of Washington's strength of mind and character is produced which no other single act of his life can give.

Under such circumstances, and with an administration so constituted, the people of America began their experiment. Gouverneur Morris had said in a letter to Jay many years before: "Finance, my friend; the whole of what remains of the American Revolution grounds there."[1] So it might now have been said that the whole of what was to be the American Union grounded there. The bane of the Confederation, the power which tumbled that weak structure to the gound, was finance, and it was the pivot on which the future of the country turned. To Hamilton, of course, fell the duty of shaping, or rather of creating, a financial policy; and upon him was laid the burden of giving tangible existence to a government which as yet

[1] Sparks's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, vol. i. p. 234.

existed only on paper. The Secretary grappled fearlessly with the great problem before him, and the appearance of his first report was the dawn of a new era in American history. That policy, which will make its author famous as long as the history of this country survives, was divided into three parts: the payment of the foreign debt, the payment of the domestic debt, and the assumption of the state debts. The necessity of paying the foreign debt was conceded by all, and duly provided for. On the second point great dissension arose. The extremists in opposition were not in favor of paying the domestic debt in full; the more moderate were in favor of discrimination among the holders of the certificates, — a proposition absurd in itself, and which involved an absolute contradiction of the very theory advanced. After a prolonged struggle this measure was also carried. Then came the tug of war, — the assumption of the state debts. In the second question the opposition had not a show of reason to support their views, but on the state debts two opinions were possible. Hamilton argued, "that it was a measure of sound policy and substantial justice," because "it would contribute, in an eminent degree, to an orderly, stable, and satisfactory arrangement of the national finances. Admitting, as ought to be the case, that a provision must be made, in some way or other, for the entire debt, it will follow that no greater revenues will be required, whether that provision be made wholly by the United States, or partly by them and partly by the States separately."

"The principal question then must be, whether such a provision cannot be more conveniently and effectually made, by one general plan, issuing from one authority, than by different plans, originating in different authorities? In the first case there can be no competition for resources; in the last there must be such a competition."

A vivid picture of the disasters and troubles which such a competition of resources would inevitably cause follows, but unfortunately this vigorous passage is too long for quotation. The report then continues: —

"If all the public creditors receive their dues from one source, distributed with an equal hand, their interest will be the same. And having the same interests they will unite in the support of the fiscal arrangements of the government, — as these too can be made with more convenience where there is no competition."

"If, on the contrary, there are distinct provisions, there will be distinct interests, drawing different ways. That union and concert of views, among the creditors, which in every government is of great importance to their security, and to that of public credit, will not only not exist, but will be likely to give place to mutual jealousy and opposition. And from this cause the operation of the systems which may be adopted, both by the particular States and by the Union, with relation to their respective debts, will be in danger of being counteracted." Proof is then offered that the state creditors would be in a worse position than

those of the Union, and the injurious effects of this pointed out. The debts of the States are shown to be of the same nature as those of the Union, and this portion of the report concludes with a plan for assumption.[1]

The opposition were not convinced, and the parties came to a dead-lock. Hamilton was driven to desperate measures. He had failed to convince, he could not control, he was unable to manage; there was but one escape, — he negotiated. Jefferson was called to the rescue, and Hamilton arranged with him that the debts should be assumed, and the capital in return be placed on the Potomac. This arrangement was simply a trade in which one measure was bargained off against another. Hamilton gave up something for which he did not care a jot and by so doing secured the necessary number of Southern votes. There is no evidence that Hamilton regarded it in any other way, and he maintained complete silence on the subject, apparently thinking the matter too obvious to require explanation, and being unwilling probably to say anything about his friends in Congress who by changing their votes had made the bargain possible. The other party to the contract has left us a full account. Jefferson, having gratified his local prejudices in regard to the capital, and having made his trade successfully, endeavored subsequently to escape from responsibility. In order to do this he raised a cloud of falsehood, and excused himself on the ground, unparalleled for its cool and

[1] Hamilton's *Works*, vol. iii. pp. 13–17.

consummate audacity, that he had been duped by Hamilton.

The financial policy was thus complete. My intention is not to discuss its merits as a scheme of finance, nor to endeavor to criticise it as a funding system, but simply to treat it as a great state policy. No reasonable man would now dispute the first two propositions as to the foreign and domestic debts, but on the assumption of the state debts opinions have differed. It has been urged that as a whole it was too strong a policy, that it endangered the existence of the government and of the Federalist party. Those persons who argue in this way forget that there was no government and no party until this policy gave them both existence. If it be said that it endangered the success of the new scheme, the only reply is that a scheme too weak to stand such a strain was a worthless one. Weak, time-serving policy had well-nigh ruined America, and the time had come when a most vigorous and energetic one could alone save the Union. Putting aside for a moment the first two divisions, can it be fairly supposed that the policy would have been better without assumption? To most persons at the present day, the arguments of Hamilton, already cited, are absolutely convincing. Without assumption, disintegration and consequent anarchy were probable, trouble and disaster certain. The great merit of the scheme was in its cohesive force, and this of itself is overwhelming. Mutilated in this respect, the policy would have effected comparatively little, and would have been

shorn of its most essential part. But it is folly to attempt to multiply arguments. In a field where Hamilton has gathered, few men can find much to glean. The means, by which the measure of assumption was carried and the plans of the treasury completed, have been criticised; but it is not easy to see why men were not justified in abandoning the site of a capital in order to save a great financial policy. The sacrifice made by Hamilton's friends at least involved no principle, for the situation of the capital was a mere question of expediency. Jefferson's friends, if we put the worst construction on it, gave up a principle in order to obtain the national capital for the South but they might fairly say, on the other hand, that they acted in the interests of harmony and to strengthen the new government. The great question was settled by a trade and it is better to call the solution which was reached by its right name. It was not a compromise, as Jefferson termed it; it was a bargain and sale, the deliberate trading of one measure for another. But the policy, as such, was none the less great; and despite the railings of Hamilton's enemies, then and now, the great achievement of his life has earned the gratitude of the American people, for nothing can detract from the bold creative genius and the manly energy which made national existence a possibility.

The work of Hamilton bore the test of immediate trial, and its success was brilliant. The Constitution was not destroyed but strengthened, the government

was converted from a dream to a reality, and a great party was called into being. In discussing the merits of this policy as a scheme of finance, it can at most be said that Hamilton himself might have improved it. It cannot be urged that there was any other scheme then presented, or any objections then brought forward of the least weight. Jefferson's criticisms would disgrace a modern school-boy, and indicate a profundity of ignorance of which he can hardly be conceived capable. Madison opposed the policy because he was a Virginian, and wished to remain in public life; and the result was that the emanations of his mind, usually so lucid and powerful, are on this subject confused to the last degree. If Hamilton erred in details, it can be proved in but one way, from his own utterances, assisted by the advances of a century of progress.

Such measures, while they were certain to rally a powerful party to their support, were equally certain to arouse a violent opposition. Very unfortunately, the opponents of Hamilton were incapable of offering any reasonable opposition to his measures, and this drove them to attack him personally, and on the score of honor and character. Even more unfortunate was the fact that the leader of such an opposition was Hamilton's colleague in the cabinet. The inevitable explosion followed. One secretary rewarded a versifier and hack-writer by a government place, and then aided and abetted his subordinate in an attack on his colleague. The other secretary rushed himself into the arena, descended into the newspapers, with scarcely

the poor excuse of self-defense, to deface and tear to pieces the character of the prime minister of the very administration of which he was himself a member. This quarrel and the manner in which it was conducted does not present a creditable or pleasing picture. After such a broil, there could, of course, be no real or lasting peace, and the cabinet soon broke up. The rest of Hamilton's official life was dignified and honorable. He had created and carried into operation the National Bank, at that time an essential and useful measure, and devoted himself to perfecting the organization and directing the policy which he had originated. The latter portion of the secretaryship would be pleasant to dwell upon. To describe the attack made by the blatant Giles, backed secretly by Madison and Jefferson, and the sudden and energetic manner in which Hamilton turned upon the wretched tool and crushed him, would be to describe a very dramatic incident. Many morals useful at the present day also might be drawn from this proceeding. There was no chicanery, no abuse of the accusers, no attempt to divert attention from the real issue. On the contrary, Hamilton told every detail, and by almost superhuman efforts laid bare in two weeks his whole career as secretary. Strong in his integrity and dignified in his virtue, he not only met every charge, but repeatedly demanded fresh investigations from those who had crushed themselves in attacking him. To dwell upon his last days in office, and the sincere regrets of Washington and the Federalist party at his

resignation, would be still pleasanter. But all this must be passed over, as well as those years of active professional life during which Washington still turned to his former secretary for counsel and advice, still asked him to draft his messages, to advise the cabinet, and to give his powerful support. We must come at once to the second great event in Hamilton's career: the downfall of his party.

The Federalist party was a very remarkable political organization. For twelve years it not only carried out a strong policy, but it succeeded in raising up around our constitutional liberties barriers so strong that when the great tide of democracy set in with the election of Jefferson, it was confined by certain limits which it could not destroy. In short, the Federalists had made disintegration so difficult as to be for many years practically impossible. Yet the men who accomplished all this were never, except during the excitement against France, in sympathy with the majority of their countrymen. They succeeded in holding their own by sheer weight of ability. With the exception of Jefferson, Gallatin, and Madison, the last of whom cannot be fairly numbered with either party, the Federalists comprised all the able men in the country. Washington, Marshall, Hamilton, and John Adams are alone enough to justify all that can be said on the score of ability. But when it is considered that the second rank was filled by such men as Jay, Gouverneur Morris, Rufus King, Ames, Sedgwick, Pickering, Cabot, Wolcott, Ellsworth, Dexter, Dana, Strong, and

the two Pinckneys, to go no farther, the combination must have been one of irresistible power. By their intellectual supremacy they carried one strong measure after another against great odds, and forced the people into the strait and narrow path which led to an honorable and prosperous future. But with all their strength and all their ability there was one condition, and that a very delicate one, on which their whole success depended. So long as all moved in harmony they could always defy a Democratic majority; but the instant perfect unison was lost, ruin became inevitable. So long as Washington remained in the presidency, the Federalists were safe. His unquestioned greatness formed a bulwark against which no one was willing to dash himself, and every one stood in awe of his personal character; but the withdrawal of Washington severed this bond, and in the nature of things the dissolution of the Federalists could have been averted only by the most consummate tact, the most delicate consideration and much mutual forbearance on the part of the leaders. After the retirement of Washington, however, the Federalists were not even so far fortunate as to have an undisputed chief. There were two men, neither of whom claimed leadership, but each of whom considered himself its indisputable possessor. Unhappily, also, both were to a certain extent right. Adams was the leader of the party *de jure;* Hamilton, *de facto.* Neither considered the other's claims, or apparently admitted that he had any. It is perfectly clear that Adams's only proper course was to unite

Hamilton to himself by the strongest tie. He had been elected by a party; he represented that party and their policy; he was bound by every rule of common-sense to hold his party together by all honorable means. The one necessary quality was tact, or rather the most consummate address, and this John Adams did not possess. It was perfectly possible to manage Hamilton; he was by no means an unmanageable or unreasonable man when properly treated. Washington had already managed him with perfect success. Tact, good judgment, consideration, and a certain amount of deference were required, and all might have gone well. But it never occurred to Adams that this was necessary, or that he alone was not quite competent to control the Federal party. A more fatal blunder was never committed. Whatever Hamilton's merits or defects may have been, it is certain, as a matter of fact, that to attempt to guide the Federal party without at least his tacit approval was an impossibility. Hamilton's true course was equally obvious. Occupying the position he did, he was clearly at liberty to offer frankly his suggestions to the President. If these suggestions were rejected, then he ought either to have held his tongue, or, if the worst came to the worst, have gone into open opposition. Hamilton did neither. As Adams had a theory that he could control the party unassisted, so Hamilton had a theory that he could control Adams. In pursuit of this theory he committed a blunder as fatal as Adams committed in the pursuit of his. He undertook to man-

age Adams through the medium of the party and the cabinet. The situation was still further complicated by the character of Timothy Pickering, the Secretary of State, who, although in general sympathy with Hamilton, nevertheless aspired, after his own fashion, to lead the party himself, was utterly unmanageable, and was bent upon coercing the President. With both the leaders of the party hopelessly committed to radical errors, and with the cabinet and the President contending for supremacy, the new administration opened.

There is nothing in the whole province of history so disagreeable or so generally worthless as personal quarrels. In this case one is reluctantly brought to the distasteful task of following the outlines of such a quarrel, because personal animosities were the sole cause of the premature ruin of a great party. I have tried to indicate the fatal theories to which both Hamilton and Adams were wedded; it merely remains to point out some of the worst results.

Even before the election, trouble had arisen. Hamilton's chief desire was to defeat Jefferson for the vice-presidency; he held, and rightly, that this could be effected in but one way, — by casting all the Federal votes equally for the two Federal candidates, Adams and Pinckney. The danger of this course was, that Pinckney, the second choice, might be brought in over Adams who was the first choice. This risk Hamilton was perfectly ready to take, and made no secret that, to him personally, such a result would have been

agreeable. There is not a scintilla of evidence that he ever intended to do more. He has been charged with bad faith, but it is a perfectly groundless charge. He never pretended that the election of Pinckney would displease him, but he never intrigued with a view to defeat Adams. The accusation was freely made at the time by the friends of Adams, and denied by those of Hamilton. The publication of the private letters of all parties has sustained fully the denial. Adams, naturally enough, however, took great umbrage. With perfectly human inconsistency he was angry because Hamilton did, in 1796, what eight years before he had abused him for not doing. The Adams men, however, threw away their votes, and Jefferson, as Hamilton had anticipated, secured in consequence the vice-presidency. Temporarily this cloud passed away, and for some time things went smoothly. At last came the alarm of war with France, and Washington was called upon to take command of the provisional army. He accepted the call on condition that the general officers should not be appointed without his consent, and to this condition the President acceded. Washington made up his mind that, in the formation of the new army, the only proper and sensible course was to proceed entirely *de novo*, without any reference to the old army. He hesitated for some time as to whether Hamilton or Pinckney should be second in command; while from the beginning he considered Knox unfit to be next himself. In favor of Pinckney were political considerations of his weight and influence, since the

seat of war would probably have been in the Southern States. In favor of Hamilton were greater abilities, his own preference, and that of the Federal leaders. The latter considerations prevailed, and he sent in Hamilton's name at the head of the list. The President sent it back with the order unchanged to the Senate, and the commissions were all dated the same day. The President then, Knox being dissatisfied, suddenly changed his mind, and put Knox first. Washington objected and wrote a letter, which could hardly have been pleasant reading for the President, who thereupon gave way. Hamilton's friends had written to Washington at the outset urging his claims, as they had an undoubted right to do, and they wrote again in great alarm when the President changed his mind. Adams gave as his reason that he thought Knox legally entitled. Washington had rejected this theory from the beginning; and, at the very time when it was put forward, Adams was making other appointments which directly contravened his own rule. In describing this affair I have regarded nothing but the original letters from all parties, and have based my account so far as possible on the letter detailing the whole business from Washington,[1] whose sense and veracity no one can have any inclination to dispute. The most that can be said against Hamilton in this affair is, that he wrote a letter, in a tone somewhat disagreeably self-asserting, urging his own claims on Washington. Upon Adams must fall the whole

[1] *Washington's Writings*, vol. xi. p. 304.

blame for precipitating a quarrel on this point. The reason he gave for his action was perfectly untenable; and it is hard to see that he was actuated by anything except a dislike and dread of Hamilton. This difficulty, at any rate, made all parties bitter and suspicious. Hamilton and his friends began to see that they could not control the President, and to suspect that he meant to destroy them and break them down, while Adams, smarting under a sense of defeat, became suspicious of intrigues to control him, which certainly existed, although not in this particular case. The quarrel engendered by this rash and mistaken action on the part of the President soon broke forth again with tenfold force. It has been said that things went smoothly at first, a piece of good fortune which arose from the fact that Adams and Hamilton both favored the same policy, thus making an irresistible combination, against the power of which the cabinet struggled in utter helplessness, and furnishing, unconsciously, the strongest proof of the absolute necessity of that union which overweening self-confidence caused both the Federal leaders to reject. In the great excitement attendant on the indignation against France, the Federal party received general support; and, for the only time in their history, found themselves masters of a complete majority, which, with the war fever, seems to have turned their heads. They proceeded, unchecked, to great extremes. Their principal mistake was the passage of the Alien and Sedition Acts. The idea conveyed by Mr. Morse that

Hamilton opposed these measures is quite erroneous, since, as a matter of fact, he was one of their strongest supporters.[1] The mistake has arisen from a too hasty reading of Hamilton's urgent letter to Wolcott, which was really directed against the first draft of the Sedition Act, — a most outrageous proposal, which no man in his senses would have supported, and which was substantially rejected. All the Federalists alike are responsible for the measures actually adopted, which subsequently told so heavily against them. They were errors due to the dogmatic character of the Federalist leaders, and their ignorance of the popular nature. All coöperated very heartily in the war measures, but Adams was the first to see the honorable opportunity for making peace. True to the policy of Washington, true to the best interests of the country, to his lasting honor he saw the right and pursued it. It was the greatest act of Adams's life, and is alone sufficient to stamp him as a truly great man. At a very similar juncture Washington had carried through the Jay treaty, and brought his party out from the ordeal more united than before. Lack of tact again proved Adams's stumbling-block; and though he carried through as bravely and courageously as Washington the same true policy, without a thought for himself or the hazards of the undertaking, he did it in such an unfortunate manner as to bring his party out of the struggle rent with dissensions. Hamilton was not bent on war at all events,

[1] Hamilton's *Works*, vol. vi. p. 387.

but he was much less ready to seize the first chance for peace than Adams. By no means so violent against the proposed peace-commission as his less able friends, he yet opposed and strove to delay the departure of the envoys. He even tried, personally, to change the President's opinions; but Adams was too clearly in the right and too perfectly conscious of his own rectitude to think of yielding. The commission was sent, the country was saved from a useless and destructive war, but the Federal party was ruined. Adams's conduct in neglecting Hamilton, and in the affair of the generals, had been the first stroke; but it was reserved to Hamilton and his friends to deal the death-blow to the party. Adams, justly indignant with the course of his secretaries, dismissed Pickering and McHenry; and Hamilton, on the eve of the election, published his famous attack on Adams. This was the great error of his public life. He assailed the President bitterly and wound up by advising everybody to vote for him, a most impotent conclusion. Blinded by passion, Hamilton had ruined Adams and the party together, and was destined, before reason returned, to leave a blot on his own fame which cannot be effaced. This was the proposal to Jay to convene the actual legislature of New York in extra session, change the electoral law, and take the choice of electors out of the hands of the legislature elect. A more high-handed and unscrupulous suggestion it would be difficult to conceive, and Jay, very properly, would not listen to it.

All was now over. Adams and Hamilton between them had destroyed their party, and on them the whole blame must rest. Hot-tempered and domineering, neither would give way, and the real if not avowed struggle between them for supremacy brought down in undistinguishable ruin the party they had helped to build up. The Federal party had done a great work, and had insured, so far as possible, a stable government. It found America degraded in the eyes of the world, weak and helpless, rent with internal disorders, on the very brink of final ruin. It left her respected abroad, strong and powerful at home, secure under a settled and stable government, fairly started on the broad road of greatness and prosperity. So great had been its policy, so wise its measures, that when Mr. Jefferson and his friends came into power they were forced to accept the system of their enemies. With the exception of the Alien and Sedition Laws, which expired by limitation, there was no act of the Federalists that the Democrats either dared or could undo. The debt of gratitude due to that great party is immense, and their admirers may point to their achievements for vindication and be content. Yet there is no sufficient reason for assuming that the career of the Federalists must necessarily have ended as it did. There was at least a fair prospect that a long period of usefulness was still possible, that in their strong hands the miseries and disgraces of the next fifteen years might have been avoided, and that they, instead of their opponents,

might have enjoyed the fruits of their own hard labors. Ultimately Jeffersonianism must have prevailed, but at the time of its actual triumph it came too soon, and Jefferson's early victory was secured solely by the errors of his opponents. So long as the Federalists were united they were invincible. But Adams's display of jealousy in his appointments of major-generals, his rough-shod riding in the case of the peace commission, and Hamilton's mad retaliation upon him, together with the intrigues of the secretaries, destroyed at once the subtle charm. The delicate organization, once shattered, could never be restored.

There is a feeling of intense relief in turning from Hamilton amidst the falling ruins of his party, to consider his conduct in regard to Burr. The last of the Federalists to lose his head, he was the first to regain it. Gouverneur Morris has described himself after the defeat as standing in the unenviable position of the one sober man among a crowd of drunken revelers. The simile was only too apt. The Federalists were drunk with rage, maddened by their own folly, frenzied with hatred of their arch-enemy, Jefferson. In this dangerous mood they listened to the intriguing whispers of Burr, and contemplated electing him to the presidency by their votes in the House. Hamilton threw himself at once into the breach. He hated Jefferson, he was personally on good terms with Burr. But he knew Burr's character, and he abhorred the scheme which was contemplated. A few Federalists listened finally to the voice of their leader, and Burr

was defeated. The foresight, the courage, the energy of Hamilton saved the country from a great danger, and his party from a disgrace a thousand times worse than any defeat. Almost the last act of his life was directed to the same object, and we see him at the close striving to save the good name of his friends and support the Union he had done so much to create.

I have glanced at Hamilton as a soldier, orator, jurist, statesman, and financier. A few words on him as a writer, and the criticism is complete. If we compare Hamilton with the other writers of that period when every distinguished man did more or less political writing, and when there was no other native literature, it is a simple matter to fix his position. He was easily first. Not only have his writings alone survived for the general reader out of the wilderness of essays and pamphlets of the last century on similar subjects, but the "Federalist" has become a text-book in America and an authority in Europe. Hamilton, in this capacity, will, however, bear a severer test, — that of abstract merit. His writings deal exclusively with the great questions of that day, and have lost their living interest. Yet as specimens of political literature, as disquisitions on constitutions and the art of government, and as masterpieces of reasoning, they are not only the best produced here, but they will take high rank among the best efforts of other countries. One quality which raised Hamilton in this regard beyond his contemporaries on both sides of the Atlantic was his freedom from the didactic tone which

so mars the writings of the latter half of the last century. His style was simple, nervous, and modern in feeling, and any one who has tried to condense one of his arguments will appreciate the statement that the thought is compressed to the last point consistent with clearness. Yet forcible and convincing as all Hamilton's essays are, pure as is the style, and vigorous and rapid as is the flow of thought, they are hard reading. Admiring them as models in their way and as great intellectual efforts, one is forced to confess them dry to the last degree. This, of course, is in great measure due to the subjects treated, but it was also partly owing to Hamilton's character. Judged solely by his letters, his speeches, or his essays, Hamilton would appear to have been almost entirely destitute of imagination and of humor. One looks in vain in all he wrote or said for a fancy, a simile, a metaphor, or a touch of fun. That most human and attractive of all senses, the sense of the ridiculous, nowhere appears. Throughout, abounds the purest, the most eloquent reasoning, which, when enforced by the bodily presence, the piercing eye, and all the forces of his passionate nature, must have made the orator irresistible. But when we sit down to read his works unmoved by his personal influence, we are convinced, we admire more and more deeply, but we are never amused or absorbed. Still, in this field, neither imagination nor humor, however agreeable, are essentials, and Hamilton has certainly won in his own domain a reputation as a writer unsurpassed by any of his countrymen.

Thus the list of his high titles to distinction comes to an end. The great question of all is still to be answered: What of Hamilton as a man? He has been charged with being a monarchist in principle and a believer in a monarchy bottomed on corruption; with being more British than American at heart; with being a corruptionist and the proprietor of a corrupt legislative squadron; and with having acted towards the Adams wing of his own party with continued bad faith, and with a design of personal aggrandizement. To enter upon a proof of his intellectual greatness would be sheer waste of words, and therefore to weigh the charges of his enemies which affect his moral greatness is alone necessary.

A great mistake has, I think, been made by the defenders and eulogists of Hamilton in dealing with the first of these charges. He was a believer, theoretically, in the English form of government, and considered it the best, at that time, ever invented. It should be remembered that our own government did not then exist, and there can be no question that the English government was the best model, and the only one from which men of English race could derive wholesome lessons. So far Hamilton was a monarchist. That he ever seriously believed it desirable or possible to establish a monarchy, and one "bottomed on corruption," in the United States, it is preposterous to suppose. There is absolutely no evidence, except the highly veracious gossip of Jefferson, that he ever thought so, and such a theory would, moreover,

have stamped him as a political idiot, which he certainly was not. On the other hand, he certainly was not an ardent republican. He believed a republican or more accurately a democratic government to be radically defective. Morris says: —

"General Hamilton hated republican government, because he confounded it with democratical government; and he detested the latter, because he believed it must end in despotism, and be, in the mean time, destructive to public morality. He believed that our administration would be enfeebled progressively at every new election, and become at last contemptible. He apprehended that the minions of faction would sell themselves and their country, as soon as foreign powers should think it worth while to make the purchase. In short, his study of ancient history impressed on his mind a conviction that democracy, ending in tyranny, is, while it lasts, a cruel and oppressive domination.

". . . His observation and good sense demonstrated that the materials for an aristocracy do not exist in America; . . . moreover the extent of the United States led him to fear a defect of national sentiment.

"He heartily assented, nevertheless, to the Constitution, because he considered it as a band which might hold us together for some time, and he knew that national sentiment is the offspring of national existence. He trusted, moreover, that in the chances and changes of time we should be involved in some war, which might strengthen our union and nerve the Executive.

He was not, as some have supposed, so blind as not to see that the President could purchase power, and shelter himself from responsibility, by sacrificing the rights and duties of his office at the shrine of influence. But he was too proud, and, let me add, too virtuous, to recommend or tolerate measures eventually fatal to liberty and honor. It was not, then, because he thought the executive magistrate too feeble to carry on the business of the state, that he wished him to possess more authority, but because he thought there was not sufficient power to carry on the business honestly. He apprehended a corrupt understanding between the Executive and a dominating party in the legislature, which would destroy the President's responsibility; *and he was not to be taught, what every one knows, that where responsibility ends, fraud, injustice, tyranny, and treachery begin.*

"General Hamilton was of that kind of men who may most safely be trusted, for he was more covetous of glory than of wealth or power. But he was, of all men, the most indiscreet. He knew that a limited monarchy, even if established, could not preserve itself in this country. He knew, also, that it could not be established, because there is not the regular gradation of ranks among our citizens which is essential to that species of government. And he very well knew that no monarchy whatever could be established but by the mob.

"But although General Hamilton knew these things from the study of history, and perceived them by the

intuition of genius, he never failed on every occasion to advocate the excellence of, and avow his attachment to, monarchical government. By this course he not only cut himself off from all chance of rising into office, but singularly promoted the views of his opponents, who, with a fondness for wealth and power, which he had not, affected a love for the people, which he had and they had not. Thus meaning very well, he acted very ill, and approached the evils he apprehended by his very solicitude to keep them at a distance." [1]

This account has been given at length, because upon the whole it conveys as good a contemporary idea of Hamilton as can be found anywhere. The writer's powers of discernment have enabled him in a few vivid sentences to give us a picture of Hamilton's genius as well as of his errors of judgment. From this it may be seen how far he was from believing in a monarchy in this country; how he sought, above all things, an honest and honorable government, and how wonderful was his foresight and his comprehension of social and political forces. Hamilton wished a strong constitutional government, the only safeguard for rational, popular liberty. He was not prepared to urge any special scheme, but he was eager for a strong government and the creation of a powerful national sentiment. The lines above printed in italics we may well take home to ourselves in the struggles of to-day as a wholesome doctrine and a proof of Hamilton's wisdom. This quo-

[1] Sparks's *Life of G. Morris*, vol. iii. p. 260.

tation shows, also, in the strongest and probably in a somewhat exaggerated manner, Hamilton's errors, his headstrong indiscretion, and the pertinacity of his opinions as instanced by his belief in the strengthening effects of war, which drove him into opposition to Adams's peace commission.

Hamilton never believed thoroughly in the Constitution. He thought it would serve its turn and be of very great value, but at the same time he considered it defective, and urged the establishment of an Executive and Senate during good behavior, and the appointment of state governors by the central government. There is no finer trait in Hamilton's character than the unswerving fidelity with which he strove to preserve and strengthen a constitution which he believed to be thoroughly insufficient. Nothing shows more strongly the nobleness which rises above all personal feelings by honest devotion to the best interests of the people. He was a thorough nationalist, the only one among the leaders of his day with the single exception of Washington: he felt that the great danger to the national life resided in the state governments; and on this ground he urged the appointment of governors, and favored a division of the large States. A century's experience has shown the justice of these fears. The dangers to national existence, the peril of disunion, Hamilton's especial dread, have arisen since his time from various causes, the most dangerous of which was of course slavery; but all these causes have found their support in the pernicious extremes of states'

rights resting on the strength of the state governments. Whether Hamilton's suggestions would have obviated these dangers, or whether they would, by going too far the other way, have created new ones, must be matter merely for speculation. While deeply convinced of the soundness of his views in this respect, Hamilton was too keen an observer not to see the value of the innate English principle of local self-government, and that states' rights, founded on local attachments which are always the offspring of a law of nature, were, in the absence of an aristocracy, the only sure barrier against extreme, unbridled democracy and the consequent peril of despotism. In the New York convention he elaborately explained that he merely wished to so confine the state governments that they could not impede the national one. After his usual manner, he then formulated the whole theory of states' rights by saying that "destruction of the States must be at once a political suicide," and that "the States can never lose their power till the whole people of America are robbed of their liberties."[1] No man understood the true nature of the Constitution or the true system for the country better than Hamilton. He described it as a system in which "the great desiderata are a free representation and mutual checks."[2] He believed that the only possible form of government was a republic, and, although he was a monarchist in theory, he was a republican in practice, and, what was

[1] Hamilton's *Works*, vol. ii. pp. 459 and 461.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. ii. p. 453.

still better, the devoted friend of the best good of his country.

Hamilton's incautiously expressed preferences for a monarchical form as in theory the best state afforded ample ground to his enemies to brand him as "British Hamilton," but no charge was ever more baseless or absurd, for he believed thoroughly in observing the strictest neutrality towards all nations. To prove this it is sufficient to trace his course in 1782 on the secret article, or to read his arguments on the questions which arose with England during Washington's first term. Long before the nominal author had thought of it, Hamilton had formulated the Monroe doctrine. On the Democrats alone rests the heavy responsibility of importing foreign affairs into our politics. Because Hamilton would not aid in plunging the country into war with England on behalf of France, because he considered the French Revolution infamous in its course, because he believed in adopting the same policy towards the English as towards the French, Jefferson and his followers stigmatized him as a British sympathizer and adherent.

Neither was Hamilton a believer or practitioner of corruption. His personal integrity was above reproach, and his letter to Lee [1] shows how delicately he conceived his duties in office. There is not a shadow of proof that he ever used his power corruptly, or corrupted anybody, unless it was when he secured a few Democratic votes for assumption by

[1] Hamilton's *Works*, vol. v. p. 446.

agreeing to support the plan for a Southern capital. The corrupt legislative squadron was one of the many fancies of Jefferson's fertile brain. Men there undoubtedly were in Congress of both parties who held United States certificates, and of course these men were benefited by the treasury measures; and if this is sufficient to make Hamilton a corruptionist, then he was one, but there is absolutely no other ground for the accusation.

The more serious charge of acting in bad faith is unfortunately true in one instance. This was the proposal to Jay to change the electoral law by an arbitrary exercise of power. Hamilton committed this fault when he had lost all self-control, was wild with passion against Adams, and maddened by the disasters awaiting his party. This does not excuse Hamilton, but it shows the cause of the great error of his public life. The other charge of the Adams faction, that he sought empire and personal aggrandizement, was perfectly unfounded. Hamilton loved glory, but only when obtained by serving his country; and his opposition to the peace policy was due solely to his obstinate belief that a war would be efficacious in strengthening the government, in establishing the ascendency of the United States in the western hemisphere, and in assuring success to his party. He made a mistake, perhaps, in point of political judgment, but he sought no unworthy or selfish object.

Mr. Morse has given us no picture of Hamilton personally and in private life, and the materials are in

truth meagre. Nevertheless, the effort is worth making, for the personality of such a man is of much importance. Nothing shows his oratorical power better than the fact that he won such great triumphs in court and in debate without some of the attributes most essential to a public speaker. Physical qualities have a great deal to do with success as an orator, far more than is generally supposed, and not the least important is a commanding presence. Hamilton, however, was small and lithe and much below the average height of men. This is a most serious drawback, but it does not seem to have interfered with Hamilton's success. He swayed men powerfully in spite of his stature, and every competent judge knows how much this implies. The reality and force of his eloquence is shown by his moving his auditors to tears by his appeal in behalf of the Constitution before the New York convention, and the effect of his look and manner is illustrated by the incident in the famous murder trial when he so awed and terrified the principal witness for the government that the guilty wretch broke down, and the life of the prisoner was saved. This personal power, moreover, was not confined to moments of excitement. On one occasion Hamilton went to witness the performance of a juggler, and chanced to sit in the front row. As soon as the entertainment began the juggler gave some coins to Hamilton, requesting him to hold them tightly in his hand, and as the performance proceeded he would turn from time to time to Hamilton and ask if the coins were safe. When all was over,

the coins were returned, no use having been made of them, and one of the spectators had the curiosity to ask the juggler the reason of this apparently purposeless manœuvre. The reply was, "I did not like the look of that man's eyes, and I knew that, unless I could continually distract his attention, he would see through all my tricks." [1]

It is obvious, therefore, that Hamilton, although small, was, nevertheless, most impressive in manner and appearance. We know, too, that he had a fine and musical voice, and a passionate temperament, so that when he was roused he had the sweeping force which carries men with it in eager sympathy. These gifts were supplemented by his grace of movement and by his striking look. He had a singularly noble and well-shaped head, as we can learn from Ceracchi's bust, and the good portraits show a face full of character and determination. All his features were strongly marked, but his eyes were peculiarly striking. They were dark and deep-set, and in moments of passion had the glow and fire so rarely seen, and which, when once seen, are never forgotten. But at all times his glance had a peculiar penetration and force which were qualities characteristic of the man, and made themselves profoundly felt by all who came within their influence.

In private life Hamilton had a great charm of manner and a warmth and humor which do not find

[1] This striking little anecdote, which, I believe, has never before been printed, I owe to Mr. William Silliman, of West Troy, New York.

expression in his writings. His brilliancy in conversation and his personal fascination indeed must have been extreme. Adored by his own family, beloved by his personal friends, he was also unhesitatingly followed by the leading men of his party. His adherents were not sentimental admirers: they were cool, hard-headed, practical, able men, and their unquestioning devotion to Hamilton and their acknowledgment of his supremacy are the strongest proofs of his commanding power.

Hamilton's passions were his bane, and we have tried to show that it was owing to their vehemence that in moral strength he fell short of his intellectual greatness. Uncurbed passion left a stain upon his private character, and in a similar way uncurbed passion caused his political errors, and made him a principal in the ruin of his party. The moral sense was not always strong enough to rise over and restrain the passions, and the greatness on one side was thereby diminished.

I have tried to deal with Hamilton's varied career and with the different sides of his nature, and to judge him fairly and impartially, bearing in mind that great genius and splendid abilities demand severer tests than the ordinary talents of mankind. But posterity judges Hamilton as a whole. The historian may analyze and dissect, but the final tribunal passes sentence on the whole man, moral and intellectual, statesman and financier, jurist and soldier, orator and writer, all combined. It is always dangerous to un-

dertake to say what the verdict of posterity is. But it may safely be assumed that posterity does not accept the opinion of his enemies; that it does not agree with Jefferson or Adams. The people of the United States have been wont to reverence and abide by the decisions of their great chief justice, and I am inclined to think that impartial men to-day, after making an exception in favor of Franklin, would agree with the opinion of John Marshall, "that Hamilton was the greatest man the country has ever seen, always excepting Washington."

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

THE political party which carried through the Constitution and founded the government under which we live holds a high place in history, and must always possess a deep interest for the people of the United States. It was a party of strongly marked characteristics, and although in most complete and essential accord as to general principles, it had also certain well-defined divisions. The Federalists of the South, notably in Virginia, as a rule were moderate both in opinion and expression, while those of New York were showy and excitable, with a military flavor not to be found elsewhere. The Federalists of New England, who furnished the main strength of the party, were simpler in manners and habits than their New York brethren, but were the most extreme in their views and the most dogmatic in their assertions. There was, too, a general division of the whole party, as is always the case between the moderate and the radical men; and, as commonly happens, the latter ended by controlling the organization and imparting to it the tone and the characteristics by which it is best known to posterity.

If any one familiar with our history were asked to

name the leader who more than any other typified extreme Federalism of the purest and most rigid kind, he would undoubtedly go to the New England contingent and select there the man whose name gives a title to this essay. A typical man in such a party, if he has higher attributes than unflinching political loyalty and uncompromising adherence to his opinions, is well worth our careful study, and Timothy Pickering was far more than a blind partisan or the unquestioning follower of other men. He held a high place among the Federalists, — no slight honor in a party which, in a long list of distinguished men, could count the names of Washington, Hamilton, Marshall, and the elder Adams. Not only as a typical character but as a public man and party leader he has strong claims upon the attention of posterity; and yet hitherto his life and character have been but partially known and understood. In the presence of four ample volumes devoted to his biography, such a statement may seem strange; but if proof be needed of its correctness recent publications afford conclusive evidence. Mr. Octavius Pickering, the author of the first volume of his father's biography, died before he could complete the work he had so well begun. The unfinished task was then intrusted to the late Mr. Upham, and the three volumes written by him cover the most important events of Colonel Pickering's career. From a well-meant but mistaken view of the nature and obligations of history, Mr. Upham has softened the personal and political controversies in which Colonel

Pickering was engaged, until they seem to be little more than mere speculative differences of opinion; and, not content with this historical peace-making, has gone even farther, and passed over in silence the separatist movements in New England from 1804 to 1815. To write Colonel Pickering's biography in this way may have been good-natured, but it was singularly unjust to both reader and subject. Such treatment effaced the most interesting portion of Pickering's career, and omitted the very events in which his strongest qualities, of both mind and character, were most strikingly displayed. A perusal of Mr. Upham's volumes left the reader in that dissatisfied frame of mind which invariably arises from a consciousness that all has not been told. The material for the whole story fortunately existed, but it was hidden from the public eye among the Pickering MSS. in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society; and when a biography proves to be incomplete or insufficient, but is at the same time elaborate and extended, there is but little chance that it will ever be rewritten, or at least within any reasonable time. We can only hope to supply defects of this sort by a thorough examination of the original sources, and indirectly from other publications, as in the present case.[1] The unprinted letters and those now published for the first time fill the gaps in Mr. Upham's work, and enable us

[1] *Documents relating to New England Federalism.* Edited by Professor Henry Adams. 1877. *Life and Letters of George Cabot.* 1877.

to understand and to appreciate the character and career of this distinguished party leader.

Timothy Pickering was a genuine descendant of the Puritans. He was a fit representative in the eighteenth century of the race which colonized New England in the seventeenth. His ancestors were numbered among those men who had wrung a livelihood from the rocky soil of Massachusetts and the wild seas of the North Atlantic. Surrounded by hardships, in conflict with man and nature, combating earth, air, and the savage with the same grim determination, crushing out domestic dissension with relentless severity, and stubbornly resisting foreign interference, the Puritans in America founded and built up a strong, well-ordered state. Here was worked out to the end the Puritan theory of government; here, and only here, Puritan Englishmen, for a century and a half, kept their race unmixed and their blood pure. The passage of years and the advance of civilization modified and softened the character of the New England people, but their most marked qualities, moral and mental, remained unchanged.

In every way Timothy Pickering truly represented the race from which he sprang. His family was one of those which formed the strength of the New England population in 1776, and which, taking the tide of revolution at its flood, were borne on by it to power and place. Limited means, frugality, honesty, industry, order, were the essential facts in Pickering's surroundings during childhood; but narrow fortune could

not deprive him of education, dear to the New Englander beyond any other endowment, and he passed with credit through Harvard College. Returning from Cambridge to Salem, he soon displayed within the confined limits of a New England town the same qualities which he afterwards manifested on the broad field of national politics. Hardly released from college, he plunged at once into party strife, became an ardent Whig, and assailed with all the zeal of a young reformer the defective militia system of the colony. Controversy soon followed. An article in the newspaper was wrongly attributed to him, and caused a sharp attack. Far from contenting himself with disclaiming the authorship thus thrust upon him, Pickering accepted the challenge and dashed into the fight. This served as a beginning. Soon after he engaged in a conflict about church matters, and after a brief interval in still another, produced by opposing medical theories. In this last affair Pickering assailed the obnoxious principles with both tongue and pen. He wrote a series of sharp, incisive articles, signing himself "A Lover of Truth," denounced the offending practitioner as a quack, and was threatened with a duel and with personal violence.

The day of Lexington which roused New England to arms saw Pickering hastening at the head of his regiment to the scene of action. He arrived too late to take part in the fighting, but in season to be present at a council of officers, and urge, although wholly unsupported, an immediate attack on the "Castle," the

strongest position held by the British. The following year he recruited his regiment, and led it through Rhode Island and Connecticut to join the main army in New York. Scarcely had he returned from this campaign when Washington, whose quick eye had noted his executive capacity, offered him the position of adjutant-general. After some hesitation Pickering accepted this important post, and despite his misgivings rendered efficient service. The next step was to the place of quartermaster-general. The ablest officer in the American army had pronounced it a physical impossibility to carry on the duties of this position, and had relinquished it in disgust, but this had no effect upon Pickering. He took the place, nothing daunted, and carried it through to the end. Entire success was, of course, impossible, but to execute in any way the duties of a quartermaster-general under existing circumstances required energy, vigor, and administrative powers of a high and enduring kind. Here, then, Pickering remained, battling with inefficiency and disorder, with Congress, and with annoyances of every sort, until the close of the war. Peace found him richer in reputation, but as poor as ever in material wealth, and with a growing family to be provided for. A mercantile arrangement having turned out unprofitably, Pickering resolved to follow his natural inclination and take to the wild farming life of the frontier. Space forbids that I should trace out the Wyoming controversies, which are well depicted by Mr. Upham. This struggle among the borderers

forms one of the dark chapters in the little-known history of the confederation. But the dangers and turbulence of Wyoming, sufficient in themselves to deter most men from even entering that region, seem to have been a prevailing reason with Pickering in the selection of his future home. To his combative and vigorous nature, filled with the love of order and the spirit of command, this scene of disturbance offered powerful attractions. Perhaps, half unconsciously, his main motives were a longing for the struggle and a belief that he could ride this frontier whirlwind and control the storm. It is certain that to his fearless courage and persistence the peace which finally settled down upon the beautiful and distracted valley was largely due. Throughout every difficulty Pickering sought with stern justice to coerce the insurgents, and at the same time to wrest from the state government the rights which they had withheld from the settlers.

After having supported the cause of the Constitution in Pennsylvania, he was called from the wild scenes of Wyoming to the postmaster-generalship of the United States, which proved only a stepping-stone to higher things. On the dissolution of Washington's first cabinet, Pickering was offered and accepted the secretaryship of war. He was a singular contrast to his predecessor, General Knox, the "handsome bookseller" of earlier days, who was still a fine-looking man, and not a little fond of parade. Knox had not only been a good secretary, but had shone with great lustre in the society of the capital, where he had dazzled the

eyes of all beholders by his fine appearance and free style of living. To this rather splendid personage succeeded Pickering, and as he stands at the threshold of his career on the stage of national politics he is a hardly less striking figure than the retiring secretary, although in a very different way. Tall and rather gaunt, large in frame, strong of limb, and possessing a hardy constitution, Pickering was both a powerful and imposing looking man. The brush of Stuart has preserved to us his lineaments, and in them the genius of the artist has fitly represented the mental characteristics of his subject. An eminently Roman face of a type not uncommon in New England looks out from the canvas. Decision, incisiveness, uncompromising vigor of character, strength, narrowness, and rigidity of mind, are the suggestions of the portrait. A marked simplicity pervades the whole figure. "The lank locks guiltless of pomatum," and the baldness undisguised by wig or powder, to which the colonel referred with pride and John Adams with sarcasm, are conspicuous. So, too, is soberness of dress, the effect of which was heightened in the original by the spectacles that near-sightedness rendered necessary. Stern republican simplicity seems to be the character to which Stuart's subject aspired. But the picture does not tell the whole story. Beneath this quiet and even plain exterior were hidden a reckless courage, an ardent ambition, and an unconquerable will.

Once seated in the cabinet, Pickering threw himself with his accustomed zeal into the contests by which

the administration was surrounded. The famous struggle over the Jay treaty had just begun, and on this matter, as on most others, Pickering was free from doubt or questioning. He supported the treaty and advised its signature, coupled with a strong remonstrance against the British provision order. In the discovery of Randolph's infidelity Pickering played a leading part, and to him fell the duty of disclosing to Washington the conduct of his friend and prime minister.

The fall of Randolph threw upon Pickering the temporary charge of both the state and war departments, and never were his untiring energy, persistence, and capacity for work so strongly shown. Unable to fill the secretaryship of state, Washington at last conferred it permanently upon Pickering, and made McHenry secretary of war. Pickering accepted this new position with unfeigned reluctance. Neither experience nor habit of mind fitted him for the place; but he would not desert Washington, and his invincible determination soon overcame every obstacle. He could not practice sufficiently the moderation required by the position, but he rapidly familiarized himself with foreign affairs, and his state papers are able and vigorous. He proved a far better secretary than Randolph, and if his dispatches were less polished, and his arguments less ingenious than those of Jefferson, he surpassed the great Virginian in directness and strength.

The ratification of the Jay treaty was the signal for

fresh difficulties with France. There is no evidence that Pickering entered the cabinet with any violent prejudices against the "great nation" or in favor of England. But as his knowledge of our foreign relations increased, as he perceived the uses which the opposition made of their affection for France, his feelings deepened and his hostility grew apace. In France he beheld the embodiment of the two forces, hateful to him above all others, — anarchy and tyranny. He believed the French Revolution to be little less than a crusade against religion, property, organized society, and the ordered liberty which he prized more than life itself; while in the foe of France he saw a kindred people, a strongly governed state, and the sturdy, temperate freedom in whose principles he had been nurtured. Hatred of France rapidly extended to her American sympathizers, and strengthened his already firm conviction of the abandoned wickedness of his political opponents. For the gratification of these feelings there was ample opportunity given by the conduct of the French minister, and Pickering speedily grappled with M. Adet in a manner most startling to a gentleman accustomed to the delicate manipulation of Edmund Randolph.

In the midst of our complications with France, John Adams succeeded to the presidency, and retained Pickering as his secretary of state. If the outlook abroad was threatening, it was still more so at home, in regard to the party then dominant. The official head of the Federalists had ceased to be their real

leader. The mastering influence of Washington no longer held the diverse elements in check, or compelled all to yield to his wise guidance. John Adams was the official chief, and meant to be the real one as well, while Hamilton was the actual head of the party, and had no notion of abdicating his controlling position. But there was also a third leader, in the person of Timothy Pickering, whose importance during these eventful years has never been justly appreciated. The admirers of Hamilton see in Pickering nothing but an obedient disciple. The supporters of Adams regard him as the tool and mouth-piece of Hamilton. If we accept Mr. Upham's authority as conclusive, Pickering was little more than a conscientious performer of his official duties who had the misfortune to differ slightly with his chief. All these conceptions are alike erroneous. It is true that Hamilton alone, almost, among men received the utmost admiration and respect of which Pickering was capable. It is also true that Pickering sought Hamilton's advice, and that their views generally coincided. But Pickering was not the obedient disciple nor the willing tool of any man; still less was he the simple secretary absorbed in the duties of his office. He had his own opinions and his own policy, and he sought to carry them out as seemed best in his own eyes. He was, too, an active politician, and headed the attack on Adams long before Hamilton took the field. He had not the slightest hesitation in opposing Hamilton, he acted constantly without his guidance, he sought in his

own way to control the course of the administration, and he did more than any other man to precipitate the conflict which resulted in the downfall of Adams and the ruin of the Federalist party. The merest outline of the contentions in the cabinet is sufficient to prove this.

At a very early period Hamilton foresaw the necessity of a special mission to France, and urged its adoption by Washington. Pickering, aided by Wolcott, opposed it steadfastly, and kept it off during the closing weeks of Washington's administration, and it was only when Adams threw his weight into the same scale with Hamilton that Pickering gave way. Even then he and Wolcott were strong enough to prevent any further advances to Madison, who had been the central figure in Hamilton's scheme of an embassy. After the dispatch of the first envoys all went well for a time. The course of France, the insults of Talleyrand, and the publication of the X. Y. Z. letters, roused a cry of rage throughout the land. Adams took the lead in his message, the country rallied enthusiastically to his support, Pickering gave free rein in his report to his hatred of the French, and all the Federalist chiefs came forward to aid the President. But this ardent union carried the seeds of destruction, and the vigorous measures so unanimously urged by the Federalists were themselves the cause of divisions. The unlooked-for danger came from the appointments in the provisional army. In this matter Pickering looked to Hamilton as the proper person for command,

and on the nomination of Washington lost no time in urging Hamilton's claim for the second place. A contest, in which Pickering took the lead, ensued as to the relative rank of the major-generals. In this first struggle with Adams he had every advantage, while his opponent put himself wholly in the wrong. Jealous of Hamilton's influence, disliking Washington's selection of him for the second place, Adams, in his eagerness to escape from what he considered one intrigue, fell a victim to another. He listened too readily to the representations of a little knot of Federalists, like himself unfriendly to Hamilton, and on perfectly untenable grounds determined to give the first place to Knox. Hamilton was ready to yield precedence in deference to the wishes of Washington, but he would not give way to those of Adams. As soon as the President's views became known, the Secretary of State, as well as Wolcott and McHenry, made every effort to change them. Pickering roused his friends in New England to exert their influence with the President against the proposed change, and Adams, sensible of the pressure, hardened himself to resistance. But Pickering had still one card left, and he played it unhesitatingly. An appeal was made to Washington, whose wishes no man cared to dispute, and which, expressed in unmistakable terms, forced the President to give way. The victory at this stage remained with the cabinet; and in the mean time another of less moment had been achieved by Pickering, unaided and alone. The President very

unwisely nominated his son-in-law, Colonel Smith, for the responsible position of adjutant-general. Unable to prevent this nomination, which he deemed a most unfit one, Pickering posted down to the senate chamber to urge upon his friends there the necessity of its rejection. The precaution was superfluous, as Smith was thrown out by a large majority; but the incident was not lost upon the President, who attributed this defeat, as he did everything of a hostile nature, to Hamilton, who had nothing to do with it, and at the same time he was much inflamed against Pickering, who was, in fact, wholly responsible. This little affair was hardly over before another difference arose, which still further estranged the President and his first secretary. Elbridge Gerry, one of the envoys to France, was warmly attached to Mr. Adams, and sincerely admired him. It is not in human nature to feel otherwise than kindly to those who cherish such feelings toward us, for their very existence is a subtle flattery and a demand upon our gratitude to which we cannot but yield, even if the giver be a dog or a horse. John Adams was no exception to this universal rule, and he not only reciprocated Gerry's affection, but he seems also to have been convinced that Gerry was a man of great and varied talents. Pickering, on the contrary, in common with all the leading Federalists, believed Gerry to be a man of slender ability and feeble character. This belief was confirmed by Gerry's conduct in Paris, and dislike was fostered by the share which he was supposed to have taken in behalf

of Knox in the matter of the army appointments. Pickering wrote to George Cabot, "He [the President] will be convinced of Gerry's disgraceful pusillanimity, weakness, duplicity, and, I think, treachery." Of course the President was convinced of nothing of the sort, and although his confidence in his favorite was so far shaken that he permitted a moderate censure of his conduct in the first official reports, it rapidly revived as the quarrel with his cabinet progressed. From the same cause Pickering's dislike of Gerry increased in an equal proportion. If Adams and Pickering could have been content with the reproof already administered, and not sought the one to defend and the other to reprobate the unlucky envoy, all might have gone well. But neither was of this mind. Pickering, in the interests of what he deemed truth and sound policy, was bent on further reproof, while Adams, irritated at what he thought unnecessary severity, proposed to put Gerry on the same footing as Marshall and Pinckney. The President considered the Secretary to be influenced only by personal malice against both himself and his friend, while the Secretary saw in the President's course merely an insane affection for an unworthy man whom he desired to screen at the expense of his wiser and more virtuous colleagues. So Pickering drafted reports bristling with the severest reflections on Gerry, which the President either modified or struck out, and each was filled with intense indignation against the other.

At last the quarrel came to a head, and the strife

which had long been smouldering broke out unrestrained. The President took the decisive step by appointing a new minister to France without previous consultation with his cabinet. For good and sufficient reasons Mr. Adams was convinced that there was still opportunity for an honorable treaty with France, and there was therefore no doubt that he ought, for the sake of the best interests of his country, to make peace. He erred profoundly in not consulting his cabinet, even though he was assured of their united opposition, and in attaining a great end he gave a fatal blow to his party by his mistaken methods. To Pickering and all the war Federalists the whole business appeared simply criminal. They saw in it nothing but dishonor to their country and ruin to their party. So completely blinded were they to the true state of the case that they entirely failed to perceive that, if they were united, peace as well as war might be their salvation. Yet they felt themselves to be helpless, and the utmost they could effect was to send three commissioners instead of one. With this tameness Pickering was dissatisfied. Could he have had his way, he would have brought in the Senate to control the President and reject the nominations on the ground that negotiation was inexpedient. But now, as in the near future, Pickering found no one ready to proceed to the extremities for which he was himself prepared. The Federalists could not abandon the constitutional principle which they had themselves laid down as to the independence of the Executive. But, though fet-

tered in action, Pickering gave vent to fierce denunciations of the President's course in letters to his friends in Massachusetts. These denunciations quickly got abroad, and the President, or some of his immediate circle, retorted with the cry of "British faction." The quarrel was soon beyond the possibility of disguise; the Federalist nomination had been made, the New York elections had occurred, party safety no longer seemed to demand an appearance of harmony, and Adams turned Pickering out of the cabinet, the latter — with characteristic stubbornness — having refused to resign. The case is sufficiently simple, yet Mr. Upham has dwelt upon the friendship between the President and his first minister until Pickering's expulsion becomes almost inexplicable. In reality, the only wonder is that they did not come to blows long before. There can be no doubt that if Adams had forced Pickering out at the first indication of a settled opposition, and of one which he could not control, he would have acted wisely. As it was, the cabinet engaged in desperate warfare with the President, each faction found its supporters, and the whole party was torn to pieces. Pickering personally was not in the least dejected by his overthrow, for depression under defeat was at all times unknown to his strong nature. He merely fell back and renewed the conflict with increased vigor. His first idea at this moment was the political destruction of the President, whom he now believed to have gone over to the Democrats. He felt sure that party safety could not be secured except

by the overthrow of Adams and the election of Pinckney, but he did not see that this plan, wise enough perhaps in the beginning, had been rendered impossible by the action of the party in their nomination. Further attacks could only make the matter worse. But Pickering never balanced advantages, and he now addressed a series of letters to all the leading Federalists on the subject of his dismissal, portraying the President's conduct in language which is remarkable for its unrestrained and vigorous invective, while the writer's peculiar attention to the most minute facts and exact details is nowhere so strikingly shown. These letters were in fact elaborate and picturesque indictments of the President, varying somewhat to suit the prejudices of the recipient. The opening sentence of the letter to Pinckney, Pickering's candidate for the presdency, is perhaps the most concise expression of the writer's emotions at this time: —

"Indignation and disgust, — these are and long have been my feelings towards Mr. Adams: disgust at his intolerable vanity; indignation for the disgrace and mischief which his conduct has brought on the cause of federalism and the country. When I say 'long have been,' I mean for near two years past, when I began to know him. In ascribing to Mr. Adams 'upright views,' I refer to public measures in general. If you were to scan his actions minutely, you would find them influenced by selfishness, ambition, and revenge; that his heart is cankered with envy, and deficient in sincerity; that he is blind, stone

blind, to his own faults and failings, and incapable of discerning the vices and defects of all his family connections. Hence his insatiable desire to provide in public offices for himself and them, and his injurious treatment of those who have opposed his wishes. Of this number I have the honor to be one."

In one of these letters, written with no other object than to vindicate himself and save the party from the leadership of Adams, Pickering says, "You know that I have not the talent to lead a party, while you will allow me such a share of common-sense as must guard me against the miserable ambition and folly of attempting it." His humility, he says further, would have alone prevented him from trying to control the administration of government, and the charge that he did made such an effort was the offspring of jealousy which he pitied and despised. Pickering was not a man who ever disguised his feelings, and his denial of a wish to lead a party or control the government was undoubtedly a matter of conscientious belief. His state of mind is a curious example of the Puritan habit of absorption in a cause. So firmly did Pickering believe that he was right that he conceived there could be no honest difference of opinion, and he was thoroughly convinced that all he had done was solely in behalf of abstract truth, where neither personal interests nor opinions entered. To him the contest did not appear as a conflict between opposing views, for both of which there was something to be said. Victory to him was not party victory, but a triumph of the prin-

ciples of immutable justice. Defeat was not party defeat, but an overthrow of the powers of light by the powers of darkness. To him the maxim that there are two sides to every question seemed an insult to the understanding. There was right and wrong, and the eternal battle between them; there could be nothing else. His mental attitude was that of the Puritan of the seventeenth century, who regarded everything he did as done for the service of God, in which no mere personal feelings or individual interests had part. But the Puritan who seemed to himself only the poor instrument of a higher will stood before the world as a stern fanatic, a bold soldier, a wise statesman, and man of action. So Pickering, satisfied in his inmost soul that he was but the servant of truth, the defender of right, who was too wise to aspire to party leadership and too humble to seek control of the government, appeared to his fellow-men an ambitious and capable politician, an uncompromising partisan, an unflinching friend, and a relentless foe. From him Adams met the most determined resistance, and Pickering's attacks had deeply injured the party long before Hamilton, in his famous pamphlet, dealt the final blow to union and mutual confidence.

The dissolution of the cabinet was but the prelude to the downfall of the Federalists, and once more Pickering found himself deprived of public office and almost destitute of private property. In his own words, "Though ashamed to beg, he was able and willing to dig;" so he again turned his face toward the

unsettled lands of the West, and with cheerful courage prepared to return to the wilderness. The delicate generosity of his personal and political friends, however, saved him from this fate, and he came back to Massachusetts, destined never more to leave his native State, whose people soon called him from his farm to represent them in the Senate of the United States.

When Colonel Pickering reëntered public life in 1803 he found the political world something very different from what it had been in the days when as secretary of state he had helped to shape the policy of the nation. The Federalists in the Senate were so few in number as hardly to deserve the name of a minority. They were conspicuous for ability and determined purpose, but they were politically helpless. The Louisiana purchase had just been consummated. Jefferson's stealthy removals from office looked like the political proscription so unhappily familiar to a later generation; the dominant party was growing rapidly, even in New England, and the constitutional amendment in regard to the manner of casting the electoral vote seemed calculated to insure the Democratic tenure of power. Worst of all, the courts, — the last Federalist strongholds, the only remaining bulwarks of good government, — were, as Pickering believed, menaced with destruction. There can be no doubt that the more violent Democrats aimed at a complete subversion of the judiciary, and here, certainly, the Federalists had good reason for alarm. Yet there

seemed no prospect of successful resistance to measures fraught with such dreadful consequences.

To Pickering, Louisiana meant only an indefinite extension of slave-holding territory, and the consequent political extinction of New England. Offices had become in his eyes nothing but a means of corruption, contrived, like the constitutional amendment, to give permanency to the rule of Jefferson, and the judiciary, that last protection of life, property, and order, seemed to be crumbling beneath the blows of its assailants. From this torrent of evils there was apparently no escape. But while Pickering fully believed ruin to be approaching, he was not for an instant cast down. His courage rose with the emergency. In the rights of the States there was still one weapon for an oppressed minority, and to these Pickering and some of his associates turned as the last but certain remedy. They regarded secession as the final expedient, but nevertheless as a perfectly natural one; and this, it must be remembered, was then the almost universal belief. The Union was new, was an experiment; the state governments were old and well-tried. The only question with the men of that day was whether the experiment had permanently failed, and if this question was answered in the affirmative, then secession became not only a right but a duty. To Pickering the case was clear: the Union was a failure. His party, his State, and his principles were about to be effaced, and there was no assurance that liberty, property, and even life itself would not soon be sacrificed in deference to

the wishes of the rabble. A few of his own sentences bring his opinions vividly before us, and show us the man, full of courage and determination, a leader among those who stood ready to tread the dangerous pathway of disunion. To Cabot, he says: "Mr. Jefferson's plan of destruction has been gradually advancing. If at once he had removed from office all the Federalists, and given to the people such substitutes as we generally see, even his followers (I mean the mass) would have been shocked. He is still making progress in the same course; and he has the credit of being the real source of all the innovations which threaten the subversion of the Constitution, and the prostration of every barrier erected by it for the protection of the *best*, and therefore to him the most obnoxious, part of the community. His instruments manifest tempers so malignant, so inexorable, as to convince observing Federalists that the mild manners and habits of our countrymen are the only security against their extreme vengeance. How long we shall enjoy even this security, God only knows. And must we with folded hands wait the result, or timely think of other protection? This is a delicate subject. The principles of our Revolution point to the remedy, — a separation. . . . The people of the East cannot reconcile their habits, views, and interests with those of the South and West. The latter are beginning to rule with a rod of iron. The independence of the judges is now directly assailed, and the majority are either so blind or so well-trained that it will most undoubtedly be

destroyed. New judges, of characters and tempers suited to the object, will be the selected ministers of vengeance. I am not willing to be sacrificed by such popular tyrants. My life is not worth much; but if it must be offered up, let it rather be in the hope of obtaining a more stable government, under which my children, at least, may enjoy freedom with security."

Pickering saw in Jefferson a fit leader for a party which sought, as he firmly believed, to establish the supremacy of the rabble. He writes to Rufus King, "The cowardly wretch at their head, while, like a Parisian revolutionary monster, prating about humanity, would feel an infernal pleasure in the utter destruction of his opponents. We have too long witnessed his general turpitude, his cruel removals of faithful officers, and the substitution of corruption and looseness for integrity and worth."

In the same strain he wrote to Theodore Lyman: "Under such a man, and with the means he possesses and can command, corruption will continue to make rapid progress, all power will be thrown into the hands of his party in all the States, and the Federalists will curse the day which detached them from the milder government of the mother country.

"Such is the fate which awaits us, and we shall live to see it; yes, the next presidential term will not elapse before what is now anticipated will be verified. One or two Marats or Robespierres in each branch of the legislature, with half a dozen hardened wretches ready to coöperate, a greater number of half-moder-

ates, another portion of gaping expectants of office, another of the ignorant and undiscerning, with the many timid characters, will constitute a large majority, up to any measure which the revenge, the malice, the ambition, or rapacity of the leaders shall propose. It will be enough, to render every such measure popular, to declare its object to be to crush aristocracy and monarchy, and to secure liberty and republicanism.

"And are our good citizens so devoted to their private pursuits that they will not allow themselves time to look up and see the gathering cloud? Will nothing rouse them but its thunder, or strike their eyes save the lightning bursting from its bosom?"

But Pickering and his associates in Congress utterly failed to catch the drift of public sentiment. The mists which hung over the Potomac then as now very often prevented politicians from beholding the country at large, or at best presented an image wholly distorted and false to its original. The people of the United States were gratified by the Louisiana purchase, and the other dangers, so enormous in the eyes of the Federalist senators, did not impress the popular imagination. But the advocates of secession in Washington were soon undeceived. If they lacked the unerring instinct, the keen perception of the popular feeling which had enabled Jefferson, in 1799, successfully to formulate and publish the doctrine of nullification, others possessed it, in a degree at least. When they applied for support and assistance to their party allies at home, some told them that separation

was undesirable and unjustifiable; while others, admitting its probability in the future, dissuaded any immediate movement. All alike refused aid or encouragement, and the death of Hamilton destroyed even the prospect of discussing the project.

Thus ended the Federalist scheme to dissolve the Union in 1804. The reëlection of Jefferson followed hard upon it, and the next year, marked by signs of decay in the old parties, was the most gloomy period of Pickering's career. He seemed to be threatened with a general desertion, and though he would have gone on unflinchingly in his opposition to Jefferson, even if he had been the only opponent of the administration in the country, the idea filled him with sadness. When William Plumer, of New Hampshire, left the fast-thinning ranks of the Federalists, Pickering's bitterness knew no bounds. He says he is not surprised; that he has long thought Plumer entitled to no confidence; that Plumer is fitted by religion and moral principles to be Jefferson's helper, and has been known to say that he considered "John Randolph an honest man." Worst of all, Plumer had censured a Democrat for telling too freely his party secrets. "This single sentiment," says the old "Lover of Truth," "is enough, by itself, to seal a man's damnation." But the days of the Federalists were not yet over. The death-struggle between France and England again involved the interests of the whole civilized world, and the timorous policy of Jefferson, built upon unsound theories and dictated by what was

supposed to be the popular wish, gave a great opening to the Federalists. They failed to grasp their opportunity and rise to national success, but they united New England against the administration. Into the bitter contest caused by the embargo, Pickering flung himself, heart and soul. An old belief, laid aside for a time, once more took possession of his mind. Jefferson was the tool of France; France was the universal spoiler and tyrant; England the defender of liberty and society. The duty of every right-thinking and God-fearing man was plain. He must side with England and resist to the death Napoleon Bonaparte and his minion, Thomas Jefferson. But Pickering did not abandon the creed of 1804. He still clung to the text of the Federalist preacher, which was often in his own mouth: "Come out therefore from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and be a father to you; ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty." The uncleanness of the Democrats, always extreme in Pickering's eyes, was now increased tenfold by their affection for France and their hostility to England, while at the same time he regarded their restrictive measures as the worst form of tyranny. "How are the powers," asked Pickering of Christopher Gore, "reserved to the States respectively, or to the people, to be maintained, but by the respective States judging for themselves, and putting their negative on the usurpations of the general government?" The same spirit breathes in the famous

embargo letter addressed by Pickering to Governor Sullivan, and read by men of all parties throughout the land, and by the leaders in Europe as well. The governor was no match for the champion who had thus assailed him, but there were others more equal to the contest. John Quincy Adams took up the gauntlet which Pickering had thrown down, and replied to his letter with unsparing vigor. Nothing, however, could stay Pickering at this moment, — perhaps the happiest of his life. In the thick of a desperate contest, in a hopeless minority, with the eyes of the nation fixed on him, the unquestioned leader of his party in public life, the acknowledged defender of principles which he felt to be sacred, Pickering displayed all the strongest qualities of his powerful nature, and although we may deem them misapplied we cannot withhold our admiration from their possessor. Again, however, he was destined to disappointment. He had the popular feeling in New England on his side this time, but the party leaders, much as they delighted in his fighting qualities, were not prepared for his extreme measures. They would not abandon the opportunity of national success as a party afforded in the embargo in favor of any plans for disunion. Pickering, too, had his eye on the nation as well as on the State, but the coalition with northern Democrats which he aimed at broke down, and the Federalists failed at every point. They forced the repeal of the embargo, and embittered by defeat the last hours of Jefferson's public life; but that was all.

The next election deprived Pickering of his seat in the Senate, but he was in the House of Representatives shortly after the outbreak of the war with England. He believed the time had again come for a decided movement, yet the eastern States still hung back. The progress of the war, however, brought angry quarrels between New England and the general government. They refused to assist each other, and the year 1814 found the eastern coasts exposed to devastation, and the eastern people worn and impoverished by the sufferings of war. At last came the call for the Hartford convention. Pickering, who had unceasingly urged strong measures on the Massachusetts legislature, felt that the decisive moment was at hand, and he sent elaborate letters to his correspondents, pointing out the proper course to be pursued by the convention. He saw that a general dissolution was setting in, and he had no doubt that the British expedition to New Orleans would result in the severance of the western States, an event which he believed to be for the best interests of the country. Decisive action by New England at such a moment might result, not in a northern confederacy, but in a union of the "good old thirteen States," dominated and controlled by New England principles. The Hartford convention met and did its work, not at all in Pickering's spirit, but quite to his satisfaction, for he felt that it was an irrevocable step, and the beginning of a movement which subsequent events would determine.

But even while Pickering was speculating about the

future and dreaming of the downfall of the backwoods democracy, news came of the treaty of Ghent, and then, with scarcely a breathing space, of the battle of New Orleans. All was over. The bitter struggle of the past fifteen years was at an end, and a new political era had begun. It must have been to Pickering a cruel disappointment. The hope of coercing the South, of building up anew the power of New England, was destroyed, and whatever personal ambition he may then have had was blasted. He saw it all at a glance, but we can only conjecture the bitterness of his feelings, for he gave no sign. However much he may have repined, no one knew of it. Useless lamentation was not in his nature, and he had, besides, the consolation of seeing all the Federalist methods of government adopted by the new war democracy. We must not, therefore, overrate his disappointment, for, ardently as Pickering had worked for a separation, he did not regard it as a good in itself, but merely as a means to an end, as the last resort to rectify bad government and establish the reign of the best political principles. In other words, he desired the supremacy of New England, and he believed that by separation he could coerce the other States into submission to New England principles, or else that a northern confederacy would be formed in which New England would be master. The establishment of the methods in government which he cherished, and the downfall of Napoleon, whom he abhorred, were sources of great and enduring satisfaction. He did not grieve for the

unattainable, nor despair because the government was that of a pure democracy. He refused a reëlection to Congress, withdrew to his Essex farm, and, laying aside his weapons, relapsed into a cheerful contentment and the enjoyment of his favorite pursuit of agriculture.

Yet he could not wholly abstain from politics. When, in after years, the old controversies were in any way revived, his spirits rose, and the attraction of the battle was irresistible. The most conspicuous instance of this sort was occasioned by the publication of the "Cunningham correspondence." These letters were given to the public through a most infamous breach of confidence, in order to serve party malice and raise the feeling in Massachusetts against John Quincy Adams, then a candidate for the presidency. William Cunningham had insinuated himself into the friendship of John Adams, and had succeeded in drawing from the old statesman a series of letters covering many years and relating chiefly to the agitated period of the last Federalist administration. These were the papers which Cunningham's son now gave to the world, and they answered his purpose to the extent of angering the surviving Federalists, of awakening old and bitter memories, and of bringing Pickering once more into the field of political controversy. In these letters, John Adams, trusting to the seal of secrecy which he had imposed, had poured forth, with his customary impetuosity, all his hatred of his Federalist opponents. He not merely attacked

his old enemies, but he made charges of all sorts against them, — some, no doubt, well-founded, but others, too, which had no support except worn-out and exaggerated scandal. These assaults carried Pickering back a quarter of a century, and he promptly took down his armor and prepared to fight his battles over again with the same unquenchable vigor, the same *gaudium certaminis*, as in 1799. John Adams's rather vague accusations and loosely-worded version of past events, though natural enough in an intimate and strictly private correspondence, were poor material for public warfare. They offered no resistance to Pickering's carefully planned attack. Fortified with documents, and with all his usual attention to details, Pickering reviewed, or rather tore to pieces, the Cunningham letters. His powers of invective were still undiminished, and the sharp, incisive language in which he assailed Mr. Adams shows no abatement in his warlike strength, and no flickering in the fierce flame of party hostility. His pamphlet would have been remarkable for any man, but as the work of one verging upon eighty it is a marvelous production. The bodily and mental fibre which made him capable of such an effort must have been tough indeed. But Pickering's resentments were interwoven with his most deeply-rooted principles, were part of his very being, and could cease only with life itself. Shortly before his death he was invited by Mr. Thorndike, of Beverly, to dine with him in company with John Quincy Adams, at that time President of the United States.

Pickering's hostility was never of the kind which leads men to shun meeting their opponents. His consistent theory was that in attacking a man's character and principles he was not actuated by any personal feelings, and he would have deemed it in some sort cowardly to manifest any objection to sitting at the same table with an adversary. In this particular instance he regarded Mr. Adams as an apostate, and there exists among his papers a vigorous definition of the crime of apostacy, clearly intended to cover Mr. Adams's case. At the same time, however, Pickering did not desire his host to imagine that because he consented to dine with the President he had on any point changed his views as to the character of that eminent person. Silence in such a case seemed, therefore, to savor of deception, and he accordingly addressed to Mr. Thorndike the following note : —

SALEM, *September*, 19, 1827.

DEAR SIR, — I intended to visit Wenham to-day with my wife, and on our return to call to see you and Mrs. Thorndike; but the rain preventing, I am by this note to acknowledge the receipt of your invitation to dinner next Wednesday, "to meet President Adams." On the supposition that I should need some *preparation* for the meeting, this notice was kindly intended; but I needed none. Whenever I should meet Mr. Adams I should be civil; certainly so when meeting as guests at the hospitable table of a friend. But knowing, as I do, his whole political career, — the

slanderer of AMES and CABOT, and an apostate from the federal principles which I have always held in common with those eminent citizens and other unchanging patriots, — it is impossible for me to *respect* him. It was his *apostacy* which gained him the high object of his selfish ambition, the presidency of the United States.

I accept with pleasure your invitation to dinner.

Very respectfully,

T. PICKERING.

HON. ISRAEL THORNDIKE, Beverly.

Shortly after this meeting came the presidential election. The extinction of the Federalists had made it possible for Pickering to regard the existing parties with some degree of indifference, and though it must have cost the old man an effort to support a candidate put forward by the legitimate political successors of Jefferson, yet personal feelings prevailed. Andrew Jackson had been always an open enemy, but his opponent was John Quincy Adams, the renegade Federalist and the son of John Adams. Pickering could not resist the temptation. For the last time he entered the field of politics to oppose Adams and advocate the election of Jackson. His vigorous articles showed little relaxation of the old energy of purpose and the old strength of conviction, but this was the final effort. Before Jackson was inaugurated, before Adams had returned to private life to answer once more, if he had so desired, his ancient and unforgiving foe, Pickering died. The last sounds that reached

his ear from the battle-field of politics announced the defeat of his enemy, and the grave closed over him before that enemy could retaliate. The last blow had been struck, the last word said, in the long strife of twenty-five years, by the strong old warrior, whose spirit nearly ninety years had failed to tame.

I have tried to outline briefly this remarkable career, dwelling chiefly on those events which have the deepest personal and historical significance, and which his biographer saw fit to pass over in silence. Apart, however, from its purely historic value, the story of Colonel Pickering's life reveals a character fruitful in interest to every student of human nature. The predominant qualities were strong, direct, and simple, yet we are occasionally met by contradictions so glaring that they upset every calculation and seem to paralyze analysis. The character of Timothy Pickering cannot be thoroughly appreciated without a constant recurrence to the marked and peculiar qualities, mental and moral, of the Puritan race from which he sprang and of which he was a type. The Puritans who took up arms against Charles I. were men absorbed in the great thought of religion. All other objects were to be attained merely as means to the one great end, — the establishment of the kingdom of Christ by his chosen people. This religious fervor slowly abated, but the principle of utter devotion to a great cause was too deeply branded in their nature to be soon effaced. This quality has been conspicuous among the descendants of the Puritans; it has led to their greatest glo-

ries, and in like manner it has been the source of some of their most grievous errors. In it can be found the key to the characters of some of the most remarkable men in our history. This, as well as other less unusual traits of the Puritan character, was possessed in a marked degree by Colonel Pickering.

He was a man of the most reckless courage, physical as well as moral, and there was nothing which so strongly moved his contempt as wavering or hesitation. It was this which caused his strong distrust of Harrison Gray Otis, "whose capital defect was timidity." Hardly less remarkable was his confidence in himself, his principles, and his beliefs. The idea that he might be in the wrong never finds the slightest acknowledgment in his letters or speeches. On one or two occasions he was not without misgivings as to his ability to perform some trying duty, or fill some high office, but no shadow of doubt ever fell upon him as to his opinions after they had once been formed. When he had settled in his own mind what was right, he pursued it undeviatingly and without the slightest trace of hesitation. Mr. Upham says that Pickering was not prejudiced. A more extraordinary estimate of character it would be difficult to find. Pickering's prejudices, and his unswerving adherence to them at all times and seasons, were one great secret of his success, and this is merely the statement of a general truth. The majority of successful men are the men of intense prejudices and intense convictions. They may not be of so high a type as the broad and

liberal-minded men, but they attain the greatest measure of immediate and practical success. They appeal most strongly to the sympathies and passions of their fellow-men; for to the mass of humanity liberality is apt to look like indifferentism, and independence like unreliable eccentricity. Utter and whole-souled belief in themselves and their cause was the grandest feature in the character of the Puritans. Yet this belief is but prejudice in its highest form, and of strong prejudices in all forms Pickering was an exponent. This assured confidence in his own principles and motives explains also the somewhat strange nature of his personal enmities. When we read his fierce denunciations of the elder Adams, and then find him saying that "he had no resentment toward Mr. Adams," the contradiction seems hopeless, for Pickering never used words to conceal thought. The fact is that his hostility, although directed comprehensively against Mr. Adams's actions, opinions, and character, was not dictated by any small feelings of jealousy, revenge, or personal spite, and ill-will. To Pickering everything resolved itself into the strife between good and evil. As the champion of the former, he felt it to be his duty, as he said to Lowell, "in this wicked world, though he could not restore it to innocence, to strive to prevent its growing worse;" and he had no patience with the good-humored cynicism of his friend George Cabot, when the latter said, "Why can't you and I let the world ruin itself in its own way?" Such speeches sank deep into Picker-

ing's mind, and he never thought of them without sorrow. This unconquerable belief in the justice of one's cause sometimes leads to a subjection of means to ends, a danger from which Pickering did not wholly escape. Confidence in his own rectitude was the prevailing reason for his love of plain statements, amounting at times to an almost brutal frankness. But he felt himself to be the defender not merely of the right in general, but of truth and honesty in particular. On these last qualities he justly prided himself; but here, as in all cases, the strength of his conviction led him to extremes. So wholly did he desire the *fortiter in re* that in public life, at least, he generally sacrificed the *suaviter in modo*.

In one important particular Pickering differed widely from those political and personal friends with whom he was most closely allied. They were, as a rule, genuine aristocrats in feeling, while Pickering was at bottom a democrat. He had a profound contempt not merely for such trappings as heraldic bearings but for any distinctions which he conceived to be in the least artificial or based on aught but the qualities and services of the individual man. Yet he was not wanting in caste feeling of another sort. He had all the pride of the Puritan who gloried in belonging to the chosen people of God. Within certain limits Pickering was a democrat, pure and simple, but he looked upon all who stood beyond the pale very much as the Greek regarded the barbarian. This peculiarity is curiously manifested in his religious belief, for

while he never for a moment doubted his own security of a blessed immortality, he conceived that but few of his fellow-men would share in this future felicity. In condoling with a friend upon the loss of a son, he says: "But we do not grieve as those who have no hope. We look forward to a brighter and a happier world, where sorrow shall cease, and where all tears shall be wiped from our eyes. How blest are they who entertain such hopes! How wretched those, like numbers round me here (Washington in 1804), whose views extend not beyond the grave, and whose best refuge is annihilation!" In the same way he exhibits the most intense local pride and the strongest affection for his birthplace: "Not that every part of the Union is alike to me," he says; "my affections still flow in what you will deem their natural order, — toward Salem, Massachusetts, New England, the Union at large." Again, he says, "Such events would not have happened in New England. I rejoice that I can call *that* my country. I think myself honored by it." Pickering's theory of society was the ideal New England democracy, where all the chosen race were alike before Heaven and before man, but where virtue and ability received unhesitating deference and maintained an unquestioned leadership.

Pickering's aversion to aristocracy in the ordinary sense of the word, and his hatred of shams and false pretenses, carried him far in devotion to the *nil admirari* principle. "How little virtue," he says, "is there among mankind! How small the number whose

actions are not dictated by their interest or passions!" No man was stancher or truer to his friends, but he never permitted affection to blind him to their faults. With the single exception, perhaps, of John Adams, Pickering was the only Federalist who had a moderate estimate of Washington's abilities, and of this opinion he made no secret. He respected Washington's character, and he even felt awed by the grandeur of Washington's personal presence, but he could not understand him, nor could he perceive in their full extent those great qualities of mind and heart before which men of all nations have bowed in reverence. The only man whom he thoroughly admired was Hamilton. The clear, penetrating intellect, commanding will, unhesitating decision, and indomitable energy of that great man appealed most strongly to Pickering, and to Hamilton he yielded an admiration and respect which he withheld from all others, although even here he would never sacrifice his own opinion.

If Pickering was true to his friendships, he was no less faithful to his enmities, performing in both respects what he believed to be his duty. He was always collecting evidence on every point, no matter how trifling, which might aid in the exposure of his opponents to the world in their real characters, and thus benefit the country and illumine dark places for the people with the light of truth. With this view he gathered a vast quantity of material, a small portion of which he used in his political controversies, but which was intended in the main for memoirs of his contemporaries.

These memoirs in a rough state are preserved among his manuscripts, and would furnish a most entertaining and valuable book if fully published.

Such are some of the more uncommon traits in this remarkable character. Other attributes, such as his industry, energy, untiring persistence, and capacity for work, are apparent in every page of his biography. In Timothy Pickering the defects as well as the virtues were positive and strongly marked. There was nothing negative, doubtful, or colorless in his composition. The same was true of his mind. His intellect was strong, active, and full of vitality and force, but essentially narrow. Within certain limits his mental vision was wonderfully clear and acute, but outside those limits he saw nothing. He was not *homo unius libri*, for in many fields of human thought he showed an equal capacity and strength. But in all alike he worked within certain well-defined and immutable bounds, beyond which he never passed. He did not belong to that small class of far-sighted statesmen who build for unborn generations and weigh the most remote effects of their actions. Pickering rarely looked into the future at all, but he saw the present with wonderful distinctness, and dealt with it as he found it, untroubled with misgivings as to what was to come after.

But when all is said, when analysis has done its work and posterity pronounced its unimpassioned verdict, we still come back to the stern conviction, the unchanging will, the unflinching courage of the man

with an increased measure of admiration and sympathy. No doubt Timothy Pickering made many mistakes, and in some instances acted wrongly and unwisely, but throughout his life he was imbued to the full with the spirit of the great Puritan captain, when among the mists of Dunbar he cried out, "Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered." This spirit, with all its shortcomings, is one the world cannot afford to lose, or men of English race forget.

CALEB STRONG.[1]

THE subject of this sketch is one of the almost forgotten worthies of Massachusetts, and he is at the same time a man who for many reasons well deserves remembrance. Caleb Strong was in active public life for forty years. He had in his day a national reputation as one of the framers of the Constitution of the United States and as a leading senator for the first seven years of the new government. In his own State he played a still more important part. He was elected governor of the Commonwealth ten times and defeated once. He was a leader in the convention which gave a constitution to Massachusetts, and was closely identified with her history from the revolution down to the close of his life in 1817. Such a career indicates a remarkable power of gaining and retaining the confidence of the people, and when it is remembered that he was the war governor in the troubled days of 1812 it is evident that he had other and stronger qualities than mere personal popularity.

But it is as a type of the New England Puritan and

[1] This sketch was prepared originally as a memoir, at the request of the Massachusetts Historical Society, from whose proceedings it is now reprinted.

Massachusetts Federalist that Caleb Strong is most interesting at the present day. A man who could adhere strictly to the doctrines of the most rigid Federalism and yet have such a hold upon the people and pass through years of difficult public service without a quarrel and without becoming the subject of unmeasured invective is an interesting study. Colonel Pickering was a type of the extreme Federalist, and yet, although he and Governor Strong held the same general views, the two men present a most marked contrast. Pickering's life was one of storm and battle. He had desperate conflicts with all who were opposed to him, and never spared either friend or foe when his principles were assailed. He was reckless, bold, and aggressive. His friend and correspondent, Governor Strong, was quite as rigid in his opinions, and in the early years of the century was as determined a champion of state's rights as the combative colonel. Yet Caleb Strong, without arousing the enthusiasm evoked by an ardent and extreme leader, and without constant and exciting personal warfare, obtained a measure of public confidence to which Pickering never attained.

The fact is that the combination of firmness and moderation, of calm sense and absolute devotion to conviction, so conspicuous in the character of Caleb Strong, made him a thorough representative of the class which formed the strength of the Puritans both in Old and New England. In times of great excitement the extremists always come to the front, and leave the deepest mark upon the events in which they

take part, and this was, of course, the case with the Puritans. But it falls to the lot of the quieter, more moderate, and more commonplace men to furnish the backbone and sinew of every great and successful movement, whether it be social or political. The leaders in this class, although less conspicuous and less impressive, are of a vast importance, and any man who fully represents them is well worth our consideration. The Federalist party of New England was essentially a Puritan party made up of men of English race and of that part of the race which has left the deepest impress upon the history of English-speaking people. A man who in his day and generation was put forward again and again as the best and most popular representative of the mass of the Federalist party in Massachusetts has a strong claim upon our remembrance, apart from the offices he filled and the stirring events in which he was prominent. It is well to turn aside occasionally from the more brilliant leaders and study the character and career of such a man as this, and in these days of evolution the first step is to glance briefly at the origin and pedigree of any one whom we venture to call typical and representative.

The great emigration of Puritan Englishmen began in 1630, when Charles I. resolved to govern without a Parliament, and when certain of his subjects determined to carry to the New World the political liberty and the religious faith which were in peril in the Old. Among the emigrants from England, in 1630, was John Strong of Somersetshire, a typical representa-

tive of that vigorous middle class in which Puritanism found its strength. He was only twenty-five years old when he left England, and he had scarcely reached America when death deprived him of both wife and child whom he had brought with him, and left him alone to face the trials of a life of hardship and exposure. Such a bereavement must have been a severe ordeal at the very beginning of a new career, but the sturdy young Puritan faced his troubles manfully. Before 1630 had expired, he consoled himself by a second marriage, taking to wife Abigail Ford, of Dorchester, where he first settled. A few years later, he removed to Windsor, Connecticut, and thence, in 1659, to Northampton, Massachusetts. The first task of the founders of this new community was to gather a church, and choose John Strong to be its ruling elder. This was a highly responsible position in the early days and in the little country villages of New England, and its possessor was generally the leading man of the town, second only to the minister in dignity and importance. Respected and respectable John Strong ruled over the Northampton church for forty years; established a tannery; was honest, frugal, and industrious; and brought up to man's and woman's estate a numerous family. Here, in 1699, as the famous seventeenth century was passing away, with all its great events, into the domain of history, Elder John died at the ripe age of ninety-four. He left nearly one hundred and fifty direct descendants, covering three generations, and all his sixteen children

survived him. The race, so well started by its founder, has grown and expanded until, at the present day, two large octavo volumes hardly afford sufficient space to register the names of John Strong's descendants. His fifth son, Ebenezer, was the father of six children, of whom the third was a son named Jonathan, who had in his turn no less than seventeen children. The second son of this numerous family was named Caleb, who in course of time married, and, departing from the custom of his ancestors, had only one son. The diminution of numbers seems to have resulted, however, in a development of ability, for this only son was destined to be the most distinguished of his name, and the most famous among the multitude of John Strong's descendants. Caleb Strong, fourth in descent from the old ruling elder, the future senator and governor, and the subject of this sketch, was born at Northampton, January 9, 1745. From the preceding brief outline of his genealogy, it will be seen that he sprang from a pure English stock, and that his family was one of the most important in his native town and county. His parents are said to have been "distinguished for original strength of mind and sound judgment, as well as for their prudent, pious, and exemplary Christian development." These latter qualities, always highly valued among the Puritans, had a special significance at Northampton in the middle of the eighteenth century, for the minister of the parish at that time was the most famous theologian of New England, a man whose acute and powerful reasoning

spread his reputation far beyond the narrow limits of a Massachusetts village, and made his name familiar wherever the English language was spoken and the doctrines of Calvin were cherished. Jonathan Edwards had already "made full proof of his ministry" in Northampton for nearly twenty years at the time of Caleb Strong's birth. In the controversy which soon after ensued between the minister and a portion of his parish concerning the "Halfway Covenant," Mr. and Mrs. Strong took no active part, but they fully sympathized with their distinguished pastor. The religious influences of Caleb Strong's childhood and youth were, therefore, unusually powerful, and they were not without a marked effect upon his character. Throughout his life he was a devout and religious man, and steadily adhered to the sober and rigid faith of his forefathers. His moderate and gentle disposition, however, and the temper of the times in which he lived, saved him from the sternness and bigotry which have always been the dangers of the creed that he professed.

Mr. and Mrs. Strong were resolved that their only son, upon whom all their hopes were centred, should have the best education that could then be obtained. Young Strong was accordingly placed with the Rev. Samuel Moody, of York, Maine, a noted teacher of the day, by whom he was fitted for college. Mr. Strong entered Harvard in 1760, and graduated in due course in 1764. In these years of study he displayed an exemplary character and marked ability,

and profited so well by his opportunities that he received the highest honors at his graduation. As he was traveling homeward from college, he fell a victim to that scourge of the last century, the small-pox, from which he barely escaped with his life, and with his eyesight seriously impaired. From this misfortune he never wholly recovered, and it was at first a peculiarly severe trial to a young, successful, and ambitious scholar, who had just selected the law for his profession. With admirable courage, he determined to persevere in his choice, and the devotion of his family enabled him to prosecute his studies. His father and sisters read to him the few law books from which all legal education was then derived, including Coke upon Littleton, in folio, which must, indeed, have appeared to these affectionate but unprofessional readers, as it did to King James, "like the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." The knowledge thus painfully acquired, however, was sound and accurate, and the method of study, slow, thorough, and necessitating constant thought, undoubtedly contributed to Mr. Strong's subsequent success at the bar. In advising his son, many years afterwards, as to the value of study, he says: —

"I wished you to be convinced of the importance of improving your time well. Let none of it be wasted in idleness or unprofitable amusement. Some exercise is necessary to your health, — especially walking some distance every day when the weather and ways are good; but lounging about and hanging over

the fences, or sitting a long time in other people's rooms, can have no tendency to promote your health or reputation. If your eyes are fatigued at any time, you may lay aside your book and reflect on what you have read with as much advantage as if you continued reading. In this way I have acquired a principal part of the little knowledge I have."

Arduously and slowly Mr. Strong worked his way through the difficulties which beset his legal studies. His careful reflection and patient thought made him a good lawyer, and his perseverance in adverse circumstances appealed effectively to the members of the profession in his native county, who had recently determined to exclude from their ranks all new aspirants for legal honors, but who nevertheless admitted Mr. Strong to the bar in 1772. Yet while, with infinite toil, he had been acquiring the theory of law, he had also been learning its practice under the best auspices. In the office of Joseph Hawley, the leading patriot of western Massachusetts, Mr. Strong studied not only law, but politics as well. It was a good school for both.[1] "We must fight," said Hawley, before even

[1] It has been alleged by high authority (*Proceedings of the Mass. Hist. Soc.* 1876–77, p. 397) that Mr. Strong was one of those who signed the Complimentary Address of the Barristers and Attorneys to Governor Hutchinson, on his departure. Many men, who afterward espoused the cause of the Revolution, signed this document; but without the fullest and most convincing proof, I find it difficult to believe that Caleb Strong was among them. Such an act would have been at variance with all we know of his principles at that time, with the influences by which

the few who were of that opinion had dared to express their thoughts. With such a friend and mentor, Mr. Strong ranged himself at an early day upon the patriotic side. Law and politics went hand in hand. He was admitted to the bar, as has been said, in 1772, and in the same year was chosen a selectman of his native town. At the very outset of his career, his moderate disposition and quiet manners commended

he was surrounded, and with his whole subsequent career. His name does not appear in Curwen's list (*Curwen's Journal*, ed. 1842, pp. 428, 429), nor in the lists printed in the newspapers of the day (see *Boston Post-Boy*, May 30 and June 6, and *Boston News-Letter*, June 2, 1774, which contain all the lists mentioned by Governor Hutchinson in his *History*, iii. 459), and the authority for its insertion in the revised list is not given by Mr. Ames in the *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*. John Adams (*Works*, x. 38) says that Mr. Strong's name is appended to an Address to General Gage. This is even more improbable than in the case of Hutchinson. Mr. Strong's name is not in the list of those who addressed Gage on his arrival. (See *News-Letter*, June 9, 1774.) Gage, however, received (October 6 and 7, 1775) two Addresses on his departure, — one from the loyalists of Boston, the other from those of the country. In neither of these lists does the name of Caleb Strong occur, and there was none from the bar, as is stated by John Adams. (See *Essex Gazette*, October 26, 1775.) That the pupil and colleague of Hawley should have signed an Address to Hutchinson is unlikely enough ; but it is absolutely incredible that a member of the Provincial Congress and of the Northampton Committee of Safety, universally trusted and respected, should have been guilty of such stupid duplicity and folly as to sign an Address to Gage in 1775, after war had actually begun. I have not been able to find any foundation for the charges of Mr. Ames or of John Adams.

him to the confidence and the good-will of his fellow-men, and with this election to the highest post in his native village began a long career of public service. The qualities which enabled Mr. Strong to hold office for nearly half a century were evidently conspicuous at the very beginning of his active life. In 1774 he was chosen, together with Hawley, to represent Northampton in the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts. At the same time he became a member of the Northampton Committee of Safety, a position which he continued to hold during the war. He here rendered efficient service to the cause of the revolution, although his weakened eyesight prevented him from serving his country in the field. Despite the troubled times, Mr. Strong appears to have rapidly gained professional reputation, and, in 1776, he was appointed county attorney, an office which he filled acceptably for twenty-four years. He rose in political life even more rapidly, being chosen to represent Northampton in the convention of 1779, which framed the Constitution of Massachusetts. Large as this convention was, it was no slight honor to be numbered among its members. All that Massachusetts could boast of ability and worth was gathered at Boston, in September, 1779, to draw a new charter for the old colony. Here were assembled all the distinguished men of the State. The old leaders to whose lot it had fallen to pull down, the young whose destiny was to build up, met under the same roof. The old spirit of revolution and independence, and the younger spirit of order,

which plucked safety and good government from the convulsions of civil war, united to give a Constitution to the Puritan state. Although a young man, Mr. Strong received the high compliment of being chosen one of the four members at large on the committee appointed to draft the Constitution. Mr. Strong obtained two hundred and three out of two hundred and thirty-seven votes, only six less than the number given to the great popular leader, Samuel Adams. Besides being a member of this committee, to whom the principal labor of the convention was intrusted, Mr. Strong served on several sub-committees for the consideration of particular articles. That his services in the convention were acceptable, and added greatly to his reputation, is shown by the many offices which were now thrown open to him. In 1780 he was a member of the council of Massachusetts which, until the new Constitution went into operation, wielded the whole executive power of the State, and in the same year he declined an election as delegate to the Continental Congress, and accepted the office of state senator, which he held until 1789. In 1783 he declined an appointment to the Supreme Bench, as his fortune was too narrow to permit of such a loss of professional income as an acceptance of this office would have entailed. In 1787 he was chosen to the responsible office of delegate to the national convention at Philadelphia, and was associated by Massachusetts with Rufus King, Elbridge Gerry, and Nathaniel Gorham in the great work of founding a national government.

Mr. Strong took his seat in the convention on May 28, and shared in the labors and debates of the convention until August, when he was called home by illness in his family. He appears to have been deeply impressed, as all thoughtful men then were, by the absolute necessity of a stronger central government, and a more perfect union of the States. There is no trace of sectional feeling or of state's rights in his course at this trying time, but he carried with him into the convention the doctrines of government in which he had been nurtured, and the democratic principles of the Constitution found in him a consistent advocate. He supported the traditional New England system of annual elections of representatives, and opposed the distinction of rank between the House and Senate, which had been urged by Gouverneur Morris as of the last necessity. He also thought it best that the two Houses should stand upon an equal footing in their mode of election and in the popular esteem. Mr. Strong showed his liberal and conciliatory disposition, as well as his ardent desire for union, even at some sacrifice of power, by sustaining the compromise which gave to the States the right of representation as such in the Senate. Although a representative of a large State, he was ready to make concessions to the smaller ones.

"It is agreed," he said, "on all hands that Congress is nearly at an end. If no accommodation takes place, the Union itself must soon be dissolved. It has been suggested that, if we cannot come to any general

agreement, the principal States may form and recommend a scheme of government. But will the small States, in that case, ever accede to it? Is it probable the large States themselves will, under such circumtances, embrace and ratify it? I think the small States have made a considerable concession in the article of money bills, and that they might naturally expect some concessions on the other side." [1]

With sound common and legal sense, Mr. Strong opposed the Virginia plan of making the judges members of a council to revise the laws. He saw clearly the importance of separating entirely the great departments of government, and was especially averse to any scheme which allowed the expounders of the laws to take part in making them. He also opposed the plan of the electoral college, and favored a choice of president by the legislature, as the simplest method attainable. With true New England thrift, he argued in favor of low salaries; and, mindful of Massachusetts history, introduced an amendment, afterward embodied in the Constitution, by which the Senate was deprived of the power of originating money bills. Soon after this, he was called away from Philadelphia, and thus lost the opportunity of affixing his name to the Constitution. But, although deprived of this honor, he was able to render yeoman's service to the cause of a more perfect union by defending and explaining the Constitution in the Massachusetts ratifying convention, to which he was presently chosen.

[1] *Madison Papers*, p. 1101.

The submission of the Constitution to the people of the various States called national parties into existence. In all the States they sprang up and struggled fiercely over the great issue so suddenly presented. The contest in Massachusetts was peculiarly bitter, and for a long time the result was doubtful. Local causes contributed to swell the ranks of the opposition; but the Federalists, although outnumbered at the start, never faltered, and by weight of ability, by some adroit management, and by a good deal of work outside of the convention, were finally successful by a narrow majority. In the party which rallied about the Constitution in Massachusetts, in 1788, Caleb Strong held a prominent place. Not only from his devotion to the cause of establishing a national government, but from his legal and political reputation, and, above all, from his having been one of the framers of the Constitution, he was looked up to and acknowledged as a leader. Mr. Strong spoke frequently in debate, and with especial force on the clause giving power to Congress to regulate elections. The limits of this sketch forbid any extracts from his speeches, which are all marked by clearness and force. They are simple and admirable expositions of the various questions of government, expressed, as he himself said of the Constitution, "in the plain common language of mankind." The moderate temper and good sense of the speaker are everywhere apparent, and his power of conciliation and quiet knowledge of character are shown at their best when he addresses John Hancock. Like most of

his party, he makes full use of the foibles of that eminent individual, and gracefully assures his Excellency that the latter's amendments would sooth jarring factions, and no doubt be adopted by the new government, if recommended by the convention.

The labors of the Federalists met with their reward. The Constitution was adopted, a national government was established, and a new era began. But only the first step had been taken. It was necessary to convert the parchment scheme into a living, active organism. The Federalists, therefore, made every exertion to commit the great experiment to tried and friendly hands, and their efforts, in New England especially, were covered with success. For her first senators, Massachusetts selected Caleb Strong and Tristram Dalton. "Our senators," wrote General Lincoln to Washington, who was anxiously watching the result of the elections, "our senators are Federal indeed." [1] Mr. Strong, unlike most of his colleagues, was in his seat on March 4, 1789, and, in drawing lots, obtained the second class, which entitled him to a term of four years. At the expiration of that period he was re-elected, but resigned three years later. Mr. Strong was an active and useful member of the Senate. He appears to have been recognized as one of the leading lawyers in that body, and most of the committees on which he served were those whose duties would now be assigned to the Judiciary Committee. His most important service was on the committee which drafted

[1] *Writings of Washington*, vol. ix. p. 468.

the famous act to establish the judiciary, which passed at the first session, and which has had an importance and an effect equal to almost any measure ever enacted by Congress. Many of his subsequent labors were connected with subsidiary questions growing out of this first act, such as regulating processes, paying the judiciary, and the like. He was also chairman of the committee on patents; and, in 1790, served on the one appointed to determine a rule for naturalization. But, besides the more purely legal committees, he held a conspicuous place on those formed for other equally important purposes. In May, 1790, he was chairman of the committee on foreign intercourse; and, in the debate on this question in the following year, while he favored the prompt determination of the question of permanent establishments abroad, he expressed strong doubts as to their necessity or expediency. He also served upon the consular and post-office committees, and on one for pensions. That he displayed some talent for finance is shown by the appearance of his name on some of the finance committees, and by the fact that, in 1791, he was selected to report to the Senate Hamilton's plan for a national bank. Throughout his senatorial career, Mr. Strong was constant in his attendance and in his devotion to his duties. It is hardly necessary to say that he acted always with the Federalists, and was one of the most consistent and unchanging members of that party. He sympathized profoundly with the distrust of France which gradually became a leading article in the Federalist creed:

and, as early as June, 1792, we find his name among the small minority who voted for the modified resolution acknowledging the reception of the French Constitution. Again, in 1795, he strongly supported the motion of his colleague, Mr. Cabot, to strike out the the words "magnanimous nation" from the resolution accepting the French flag. Mr. Strong shared fully in the disgust excited at that time by the French policy; and, if he could have had his way, would have separated the reception of the flag from that accorded to the letter of the French government. He, of course, advocated the ratification of the Jay treaty, and earnestly supported the policy of Washington, so bitterly denounced at this critical time. Although the people expected a better treaty, he thought that, like himself, they were convinced that the best had been done, and that it was our duty to abide by it.[1]

Soon after the exciting struggle of the following session, produced by the resistance in the House to the appropriations for the English treaty, Mr. Strong, wearied of public life, and abundantly satisfied with his share of it, resigned the senatorship, and returned to the practice of his profession. During the stormy years of the last Federalist administration, Mr. Strong remained in private life. He, of course, warmly supported the government against the aggressions and insults of France, and, in 1797, he writes to his friend, Colonel Pickering,[2] to congratulate him heartily upon

[1] Strong to Pickering, August 22, 1795. Pickering MSS.

[2] February 6, 1797. Pickering MSS.

his vigorous reply to M. Adet. The clamor of the French Minister Mr. Strong regarded as merely noisy misrepresentation; but, as his letters were artfully drawn, and as the people do not stop to analyze such statements, he thought it was always well to have them unsparingly refuted. This letter shows a firm and settled opposition to France, but is free from the unreasoning rancor only too common at that time among extreme Federalists. In the unhappy struggles with the President, which finally ruined his party, Mr. Strong does not appear to have taken any part, although his sympathies were probably with the opponents of Mr. Adams.

Mr. Strong, on resigning his seat in the Senate, undoubtedly wished and believed his retirement from public life to be final, but so efficient and available a man could not long remain out of office. In 1800 he was brought forward by the Federalists as their candidate for governor. He easily defeated his competitor, Mr. Gerry, and in Northampton and the six or seven neighboring towns there were no votes cast against him. A stronger proof of the respect in which his character was held, of his amiability and universal popularity, it would be impossible to offer. Another incident subsequent to this same election, and growing out of it, reveals the secret of Mr. Strong's success in winning the affection of his fellow-men. When the new governor was inaugurated, the procession usual on such occasions happened to march through Winter Street in Boston, and, as it passed,

the venerable Samuel Adams was seen standing at his door. Mr. Strong immediately stopped the procession, descended from his carriage, uncovered his head, and advanced to shake hands with the old patriot of the Revolution.[1] It was a graceful act, gracefully performed, and shows clearly the gentle temper which made Mr. Strong's long official life so free from anything like personal bitterness. But, in order to thoroughly appreciate this little scene, it must be remembered that Mr. Adams was the opposition leader, and that party spirit then ran very high. A like moderation was exhibited by Mr. Strong in his annual address, in 1801, at a time when leading Federalists, in public and private, from the pulpit and from the bench, were denouncing the accession of Jefferson as the victory of the worst principles of the French Revolution, and, as if it were the advent of a Marat or a Robespierre, fatal alike to religion and society. "You will reflect," said Mr. Strong on this occasion, "that in republics the majority must prevail, and that obedience to the laws and respect for the constitutional authorities are essential to the character of a good citizen." The words and the thought are alike simple and even commonplace, but they were rarely heard from the lips of party leaders in 1801. To this wise and conciliatory spirit, to his great personal popularity, and to his steady refusal to exercise his power for party purposes, Mr. Strong owed his long tenure of office.[2] This portion of his public life was quiet and

[1] *Life of Samuel Adams*, vol. iii. p. 369.

[2] George Cabot to Pickering. *Life of Cabot*, p. 343.

uneventful, for at this time there were no issues of importance affecting the State. The governor strove hard to get some just debts paid by the general government to Massachusetts, but they were Federalist debts, and met with small favor at the hands of a Democratic Congress. During these years Mr. Strong wrote frequently to Colonel Pickering, then senator from Massachusetts, but his letters are curiously devoid of politics. He tells his restless correspondent of the weather and the crops, and of the risings and sittings of the legislature and of their actions, but he leaves national questions alone; and there is no evidence that he had any knowledge of the Federalist plot to dissolve the Union, which was concocted in Washington in 1804. In a letter written in 1806 he gives an interesting picture of the state of parties at that time, and he expresses feelings which show that the now prevalent criticism of legislative bodies is of old date, and was even then familiar to one who had had a large experience of them. Mr. Strong says: —

"Few important laws of a public nature have been passed; but, if they have done but little good, I think they have not done any great mischief, and this in a legislative body seems to be a character of considerable merit. In general, the two Houses have been uncommonly tranquil and good-humored, and I am told that but little of party spirit has appeared in either of them."

The good humor and the tranquillity mentioned by the governor were signs of the decay of the two old

parties, and indicated the rapid process of absorption by which the Federalist power was being destroyed, even in its strongholds. Nothing but Mr. Strong's popularity retained the state government for the Federalists after 1804, when Massachusetts chose Jeffersonian electors. In 1807, this, too, proved unavailing, and Mr. Strong, after seven years of service, was defeated by Mr. Sullivan. Mr. Strong gladly retired to private life, convinced for the second time that his public career was at an end, but the wretched foreign policy of Mr. Jefferson soon changed the face of affairs, and, by means of the embargo, gave a new lease of life to the expiring Federalist party. As hope revived, they turned to their old leader as their best candidate, but Mr. Strong declined to stand, and his determination could not be shaken. He felt that he had done his part, and that his refusal was fully justified. He writes to Colonel Pickering that his withdrawal can have no effect upon the result of the election, and that in the Northampton region, where he commanded the greatest strength, there would be no loss, as the county was thoroughly Federalist.[1] In this same letter he gives his views on the exciting political issues of the day, and notes with interest the reaction produced by the measures of the administration. "An opinion is gaining ground," he writes, "that the conduct of government is evidently influenced by partiality in favor of the French, and by fear of offending them," and that they are, therefore, deter-

[1] Strong to Pickering, August 6, 1808. Pickering MSS.

mined on a breach with Great Britain. In regard to Pickering's well-known letter to Sullivan, he says that if the governor had published the letter, it would have had no great effect, as Pickering's opinions were well known, and it "would have been considered an evidence of the governor's faithfulness and impartiality; but his sending the letter back, *without reading it*, and publishing his answer in the 'Chronicle,' have had no tendency to increase the number of his friends." One may be sure that the writer of this criticism would never have made such a capital mistake, had he been placed in a like position. The whole letter shows Mr. Strong's steady and firm adherence to Federalist opinions and principles, and is characterized also by the quiet good sense with which he regarded every public or private event.

The years glided by, and once more Mr. Strong was forced by a sense of duty to abandon his retirement, and enter upon a new term of official labors and upon the most trying experience of his long and varied public career. In the spring of 1812 war was near, and the government of Massachusetts was in Democratic hands. But the approach of war with Great Britain roused the deeply-rooted dislike of New England to such a policy and to its authors. The Federalists again saw victory within their grasp, but they fully appreciated the dangers which menaced them. They needed a leader who was unexceptionable both in character and antecedents, whose personal popularity was considerable and whose firmness,

calmness of temper, and moderation both in word and deed should satisfy the extreme members of the party, without alarming and driving away the more timid brethren. There was one man, and only one, who fulfilled all these requirements. Everybody turned to Mr. Strong as the proper candidate, and he felt that he could not now, as in 1808, refuse. He accepted the nomination, and was elected. The Democrats, then the party in possession, with all the offices in their hands, with the State most carefully and most infamously "gerrymandered," were swept from power, and Mr. Strong triumphed again over his old adversary, Mr. Gerry. The Democrats, during their brief tenure of government, had introduced a thorough system of political proscription in the matter of the state offices, and the aged Gerry had been urged on in this novel business by his great leader, Thomas Jefferson. The problem of remedying this injustice, and of restoring the old system of permanent tenures, was presented to Mr. Strong as soon as he entered upon his office. The following letter shows the manner in which he dealt with the difficulty: —

BOSTON, *June 20th*, 1812.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — . . . The sheriff, clerks, and others who were ejected last year for their opinions, and who wished to be restored, have been reinstated in their offices. In one instance, a sheriff who had been removed had died; and in two instances of removal, the former incumbent was otherwise provided for, so as not to desire a restoration. In those cases,

the present incumbent has not been disturbed. We contemplate no other removals, unless sufficient cause is shown and proved, and the party accused is heard in his defense. CALEB STRONG.

The wisdom and moderation of Mr. Strong's course shines out brightly against the dark background of his predecessor's blunders.

This matter of the offices, however, was the very least of the difficulties with which Governor Strong had to cope. War was declared June 18, 1812. Six days before, Governor Strong had received a request from the Secretary of War to order into the national service a portion of the militia, to be under the command of Major-General Dearborn. On the 22d of June, the day before the news of the declaration of war was received in Boston, General Dearborn made a formal requisition for these troops, to be stationed under his command at different points along the coast. Governor Strong's position was a trying one. The opposition to the war was very general. There was a violent war party, who wished all the resources of the State to be placed at the disposal of the national government; there was a peace party, composed of members of both parties, determined to put every obstacle in the way of the administration; while the Federalists generally regarded the declaration of war as an act of tyranny, and the measures of the dominant party as an infringement of state's rights. Another and a very grave difficulty of a practical nature

arose from the extreme reluctance of the militia to serve, and from their hatred, amounting almost to insubordination, to being placed under the authority of United States officers.[1] General Dearborn's requisition raised two questions of the deepest importance. The Constitution says that "Congress shall have power to provide for calling forth the militia to execute the laws of the Union, suppress insurrections, and repel invasions," and "to provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the militia, and for governing such part of them as may be employed in the service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively the appointment of the officers." The first question was who was to judge whether one of the three exigencies in which Congress had power to call out the militia had arisen; the second, was whether the militia could, according to the Constitution, be placed under the command of a United States officer. After mature consideration, and from sincere conviction, Mr. Strong, taking advanced ground in favor of state's rights, decided that he, as governor of the State, was the proper person to determine whether the constitutional exigency had arisen, and he was also of opinion that the militia must be commanded by their own officers. He made no reply, therefore, to General Dearborn's requisition, but referred the matter to the Council, who

[1] See Sumner's *History of East Boston*, p. 379, and manuscript letter from Governor Strong to the Commissioners of Massachusetts appointed in accordance with the resolves of the Hartford convention, January 31, 1815.

reported that the exigency required by the Constitution had not arisen, and advised a submission of the constitutional points to the Supreme Court. This was immediately done, and Chief Justice Parsons, Judge Parker, and Judge Sewall returned an opinion which fully sustained the views of the governor. On the 26th of June General Dearborn made a second requisition, to which Mr. Strong replied, declining to furnish the troops; and, a few days later, he refused to comply with a request from the Secretary of War, urging him to give troops to General Dearborn. But, although he was so jealous of what he considered his constitutional rights, Governor Strong was resolved to insure the complete protection of the State. On the 3d of July he issued a general order, requiring the militia to hold themselves in readiness to march at a moment's notice to any threatened point. Not only did he mean to defend the State, but also to comply with every demand of the national government which he considered constitutional. This is shown by his detaching militia, and placing them under the command of General Dearborn, on the 5th of August, to march to the defense of the eastern portion of the State. In doing this, he felt that he went to the utmost limit of his constitutional obligations, and it proves that he did not seek to thwart the national government from sheer partisanship. The following letter to his son explains his course at this time: —

BOSTON, *August 15th*, 1812.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — I received your letter of the

13th instant yesterday. In my general order I find there was nothing said of the President's command; but in the instructions given to General Sewall, and which, of course, would be communicated to the commander of the militia that are called out, he is directed to have two companies stationed at Eastport, and one at Robbinston, until the President shall otherwise direct, — and in my letter to the Secretary of War I informed him that such directions had been given, — so that they are to be under the command of the President, as was stated would be the case, whenever the militia should march to repel an invasion, in the General Order of July 3d. There was some difficulty in bringing the case within the exigencies mentioned in the Constitution, but I stated that that part of the State was in a peculiar manner in danger of invasion, which was saying as much as I could with truth.

You inquire whether the opinion of the Supreme Court is to be published. I don't know that I shall have any fit opportunity of doing it until the legislature meet in October. Perhaps then it will be proper to lay the whole matter before them, as well the opinion as my correspondence on the subject of calling out the militia; but this may depend on the events that may take place between this time and that.

In his message to the legislature, Mr. Strong said: —

"If this State was in danger, the regular troops

would not have been ordered away to the northwest frontiers; and, if they were so ordered, the militia were not liable to be called into service, and stationed in the forts of the United States to do duty, when no danger of invasion appeared. I have been fully disposed to comply with the requirements of the Constitution of the United States, and the laws made in pursuance thereof, and I sincerely regret that a request should have been made by an officer of the national government with which I could not constitutionally comply. But it appeared to me that this requisition was of that character, and I was under the same obligation to maintain the rights of the State as to support the Constitution of the United States." [1]

This sentence sums up the whole policy of the governor during the trying years which followed. If Mr. Strong's political principles be considered, as well as the state of the times and the party to which he belonged, his course appears both temperate and just, however much we may be disposed to differ from his interpretation of the Constitution. Had he complied with the requisitions of General Dearborn, and accepted the Democratic theory of the Constitution at that time, he would have been, if not more than man, something considerably less than a Federalist. As to his views of the two constitutional questions which he was called upon to decide, whatever may be thought

[1] See also Governor Strong's Message, in *Massachusetts Resolves* for May 28, 1813, where he reviews his course since the beginning of the war.

of their merits, it must not be forgotten that these points had not then been judicially determined. The governor of Massachusetts was as competent as the President to decide a doubtful constitutional point. In doing so, moreover, he was supported by the majority of the people in Massachusetts, by his constitutional advisers, and by the opinion of his Supreme Court. The legality and caution of his action cannot be questioned. If we cannot acquit three learned lawyers, members of the highest tribunal of the State, of undue partisanship in taking so extraordinary a view of the Constitution as they did upon the first point referred to them, we must, at least, admit that the governor was legally, if not politically, justified in the course which he adopted.

Mr. Adams, in his diary,[1] says that Governor Brooks, the Adjutant General of Massachusetts in 1812, told him that Governor Strong was completely under the influence of Chief Justice Parsons. The governor almost quarreled, Mr. Brooks said, with him on this account; and he added that it was he who finally forced the governor to issue the general order calling out the militia. Mr. Adams professes himself puzzled by this statement, as well he might be, for Governor Strong's course was a purely independent one, and his ordering out the militia came near causing a serious breach with the Chief Justice.[2] Yet

[1] *Diary of John Quincy Adams*, vol. iv. p. 423.

[2] A full account of Mr. Strong's interview with Judge Parsons on this point may be found in Sumner's *History of East Boston*, p. 738.

he adhered constantly to his determination to retain the militia under his own control, until in his judgment an exigency should arise warranting his ordering them into the service of the United States.

Throughout the war, Governor Strong steadily pursued this policy. When, in the spring of 1814, the British swooped down upon the coast left undefended by the national government, and the alarm of war spread along the shores of New England, Governor Strong put himself at the head of the vigorous movements made by the people to repel the enemy. The militia was called out, volunteers came forward to offer their services, and substantial fortifications were raised for the protection of Boston. Mr. Strong gives, in the following letter, a brief account of the situation: —

BOSTON, Sunday Evening, *Sept. 4th*, 1814.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — . . . You will also see in the newspapers that the British have taken possession of Castine and Belfast with a considerable land force, but we have no particulars, and I have no official account of the proceedings there. The people in this town are in as great agitation, I think, as at any time in the Revolutionary War; and, while this state of things continues, I must remain here, however little good I may be able to do them, though if I can help to make them cool and collected, I shall think myself not wholly useless.[1] CALEB STRONG.

[1] See also Sumner's *History of East Boston*, 401–420, for a detailed account of the defensive measures taken at this time.

The danger of foreign invasion, the irritation produced by the war, and the weak yet aggravating policy of the national government produced in the autumn of 1814 the agitation and excitement which resulted in the Hartford convention.

This measure had the sympathy and approval of the governor, who, from his situation, was even more deeply impressed than others by the dangers which menaced both state and country, and who felt the necessity of forcing a peace at all hazards. He thought, moreover, that we had no right, considering our ill success in the war, to expect good terms from England, and he writes to Pickering that he can see no reason for indignation at the first terms offered by England at Ghent.[1] "If Great Britain," he says, "had discovered a haughty or grasping spirit, it might naturally have excited irritation, but I am persuaded that in the present case there is not a member of Congress who, if he was a member of Parliament, would have thought that more moderate terms ought in the first instance to have been offered." This was a sentiment which, at that juncture, was likely to prove more true than palatable. Mr. Strong also remarks that pride, the enemy of peace and justice, had caused the war and might prevent peace; and that, if Mr. Gore and Mr. King had been commissioners, they would, without difficulty, have made a fair treaty. On the following day he writes that he finds the Essex people expect to lose the fisheries, but are ready

[1] Strong to Pickering, October 17, 1814. Pickering MSS.

to give up a portion of Maine to retain them, which shows clearly that peace was the event most desired by the Federalists. In December [1] he wrote that the arguments of the American Commissioners displayed ability, but lacked candor and frankness, and he wished that "they had not so much encouraged the language, which is already too frequent, that, if we agree to any terms which are not perfectly agreeable, we shall give up our independence." His views as to the condition and future of the West were those held by many of the Federalists, and are not without interest. He wrote to Colonel Pickering in February, 1815,[2] that the news made it evident that New Orleans would not be taken, and that its capture would have hastened the separation of the Western from the Atlantic States.

"However," he adds, "it is hardly to be supposed that the Western States will long continue connected with us. They will soon possess all the requisites for their complete security, and will naturally prefer a government of their own and among themselves to one at a great distance. The territory of the United States is so extensive as to forbid us to indulge the expectation that we shall remain many years united. But whenever a separation shall take place, I hope it will be effected, not only without contention, but with perfect good-will. We may be happy as neighbors, where a union would be inconvenient."

[1] Strong to Pickering, December 15, 1814. Pickering MSS.

[2] Strong to Pickering, February 7, 1815. Pickering MSS.

As may be supposed, Governor Strong was one of those who rejoiced most sincerely at the return of peace. He longed for definite news of the conclusion of the treaty in season for him to decline to stand again as candidate; for, while the war lasted, he felt obliged to remain in office.[1] The treaty did not arrive in time to release him; he was reëlected once more, and held the office until 1816, when he took his final leave of public life.

At last the peace and retirement which Mr. Strong so much desired, and which he so well deserved, had come to him, but they were destined to be rudely broken and to be of short duration. In 1817, his wife, a woman of most attractive character, the daughter of the Rev. John Hooker, the successor of Edwards, to whom he had been married in 1777, and whom he tenderly loved, died after a lingering illness. Mr. Strong did not long survive this severe blow, although he bore it with patient resignation. On November 7, 1818, he died at his house in Northampton, painlessly and almost instantaneously, from an attack of *angina pectoris*.

Mr. Strong's long and varied public services have left but little space to speak of his personal appearance and private character. He was tall and of moderate fullness of person.[2] He had a rather long, oval face, which in Stuart's portrait has a gentle and pleasant yet firm expression. His manners were kindly and

[1] MS. letter, Caleb Strong to Lewis Strong.

[2] *Sullivan's Familiar Letters*, p. 369.

agreeable, but marked rather by the simplicity of one bred in the country than by the polish of a man who had mixed much with the world. In his domestic relations and in private life Mr. Strong was both loved and respected. A long series of letters addressed to his son Lewis, when the latter was at school and college, give a most interesting picture of the writer's mind and character. They are marked by strong good sense, are both wise and kindly, and occasionally exhibit a spirit of sober and gentle satire, evincing always a more than common penetration and a cool judgment of human character and feelings. This parental advice is tinged with a Puritan sombreness of thought, and the traditional New England suspicion of everything pertaining to the pleasant side of life crops out here and there in a manner which seems strange enough at the present day. A few extracts from these letters will not be out of place, as they shed much light on the character of the writer, while at the same time they illustrate modes of thought and habits of life now utterly extinct.

NORTHAMPTON, *Sept.* 9, '99.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — . . . You have entered upon a new scene, and are at a distance from those to whom your interest and happiness are most dear, but I hope you will always be solicitous to preserve your innocence and virtue, and to acquire improvement and a good reputation. Your future success in life depends very much upon the manner in which you employ the time at college. Indeed, this may be called the spring and

seed time of your life, and your future harvest will be in proportion to your industry at this period. We are told that the sluggard who does not plow shall be at the harvest and have nothing. If you waste your time in playing cards, or other idle and disgraceful amusements, or in lolling in your chair, you will have the character of a poor scholar, and be despised by every one; but I hope better things of you, and flatter myself you have understanding enough to discover the value of a public education, and the importance of a close application to your studies. . . .

I am your affectionate parent,

CALEB STRONG.

The next letter was written after the death of a little daughter. It shows the strong religious feelings of the writer, and displays also that curious mixture of tenderness and stoicism so frequently met with in the Puritan character.

NORTHAMPTON, *Sept.* 11, 1799.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — . . . You will readily suppose that we are all of us overwhelmed with grief at this event. Indeed, the manners of Phebe were so sprightly and engaging, and her tongue so mild and gentle, and her disposition so affectionate and benevolent, that all of her acquaintances were fond of her. She was peculiarly dear to every one of the family, and the neighbors who knew her were every day speaking in her commendation; but, like a flower, she is cut down and withered. I hope her death will serve to convince us of the uncertainty of earthly enjoyments, and the ne-

cessity of securing the friendship of that Almighty Being who alone can support us when, like Phebe, we shall experience the agonies of death.

I wish it might have happened so that you had been here, that we might have shared together our sorrow; but we must acquiesce in all the dispensations of heaven, and I pray God that you and all of us may derive lasting benefit from this distressing bereavement.

I am your affectionate parent,

CALEB STRONG.

NORTHAMPTON, *Nov.* 14*th*, 1799.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — . . . I write only for the purpose of giving you information of our welfare, and of reminding you that it is of great importance to you to be diligent in your studies, and that you avoid every evil consequence. I heard of your being at the play soon after you arrived at Cambridge. It will not be advantageous to you to attend those amusements often. It would endanger your health, after spending three or four hours in such a warm place as a playhouse, to walk in the cold air as far as Cambridge; and, besides, going frequently to such places of amusement would divert you too much from the business you are to pursue at college. I hope that you will conduct with prudence in all respects, and that you will acquire the character of a good scholar and a person of engaging and amiable manners.

BOSTON, *March* 5, 1803.

MY DEAR LEWIS, — . . . The dress of a scholar

near the close of his term at college should be a little more elegant than is necessary at an earlier period. He must then have somewhat the appearance of a gentleman. When you was here, I thought your dress was hardly elegant enough. The coats that are cut straight down before may perhaps be called buckish, but, so far as I have observed, they are not worn by genteel people. If you want new clothes, you must go to Callender's for them, and get those that are good and durable, and take care to have them made large. If you want a new hat, you must get one. . . .

I am, my dear Lewis, your affectionate parent,

CALEB STRONG.

Mr. Strong's character is not a difficult one to analyze, and in its simplicity may be found the cause of much of the success which always attended its possessor. Mr. Strong was not a man of brilliant intellectual powers, but he supplemented good natural talents by steady application, cool judgment, and the exercise on all occasions of most excellent common sense. He was unswerving in his adherence to all his principles; but, though he was a leader in a very dogmatic party, he always expressed himself temperately, and in a fashion which gave offense to no man. This moderation of temper was conspicuous in every act of his public life. Although he frequently held extreme views, he never pushed them in practice to a dangerous distance. His temperance in word, thought, and action, combined with high character and great amia-

bility, was the secret of his personal popularity, which enabled him to retain high office at periods when, it may be safely said, not one of his party friends could have commanded an election. It is a curious fact that, in all the letters of the time, Governor Strong is never mentioned either with praise or blame, if we except an occasional general expression of respect and confidence. Of course, his conduct as a public man was criticised in newspapers and pamphlets, but rarely with personality. This was most remarkable in an age when savage party warfare gave birth to the bitterest and most abusive attacks upon private character as well as public actions. Such a complete absence of comment in contemporary writings seems strangely inconsistent with the fact that for nearly half a century Mr. Strong held high places, and was often called upon, especially during his last term, as the Executive of the State, to resolve momentous questions. Such questions, too, he never shunned, but decided them with firmness, and adhered unflinchingly to his convictions of duty and to the line of action which he had marked out, so that this silence on the part of both friends and foes cannot be explained merely by his moderate temper or amiable disposition. It shows conclusively that he did not possess those salient qualities of mind and heart which must awaken either enthusiastic attachment or deep dislike, and cannot admit indifference. A man of this sober character and even disposition does not deeply impress those about him, nor leave his peculiar personal mark upon history,

even though his actions were at the time of great moment, and became afterwards of the highest historical interest. But, on the other hand, such a man, even if he be an aristocrat in principle, secures the great prizes of elective offices in a democracy, and obtains the greatest measure of practical success, from his capacity for dealing with his fellow-men and winning their love and respect, without ever offending their prejudices. Popular and beloved, respected by all, conscientious and painstaking in the discharge of every duty, of a firm and quiet patriotism, Mr. Strong has left an honored and historic name. This brief sketch cannot close more appropriately than with the words used by Dr. Lyman when he preached Mr. Strong's funeral sermon: "You will unite your voice with mine when I say that few, very few men have sustained public honors more peacefully, and been more eminently useful, through a long life, in times that tried men's souls."

ALBERT GALLATIN.

PRIOR to the year 1860, four men, and only four, had acquired great reputations as secretaries of the treasury, and not one of these four was a native of the country whose finances he administered. Robert Morris was an Englishman; Alexander Hamilton, born in the West Indies, was half Scotch and half French; Albert Gallatin was a Swiss; and Alexander Dallas, a Scotchman. The first and the last owe their fame to the circumstances in which they were placed as much as to their own talents. Both Morris and Dallas were ministers of finance when the country was plunged in war and bankruptcy, and it was more by their patriotism, boldness, energy, and resource in desperate times than by purely financial ability that they gained deserved reputation and conspicuous places in our history. Hamilton and Gallatin, on the other hand, were not only great financiers, but they achieved high distinction in other fields, played a leading part in the administrations with which they were connected, and each for twelve years exercised a controlling influence upon his party, and made himself felt in every branch of national policy and in every department of the government.

The Life of Hamilton has been written and rewritten. Friends and foes have united to lay bare every word and every action of his career, and to subject the whole to the most minute criticism and discussion. He is now one of the best known as he is one of the greatest figures of American history. His was the suggesting if not the directing mind at the foundation of the government, and he has left an indelible impress upon all our methods of administration. But Hamilton is fortunate in other ways. He stands forth before posterity as the embodiment of a great principle, as the representative of one of the two fundamental theories which fought for dominion in the American system of government.

With his great rival in the treasury the case has been widely different. It is no exaggeration to say that, before the appearance of Mr. Adams's volumes, Albert Gallatin was hardly more than a name to the present generation. Yet, with the exception of Hamilton, there has never been a member of any cabinet who as such did so much and exercised so much power as Albert Gallatin. To have his Life and Letters,[1] the former well written and the latter carefully edited, is to obtain a great addition to our historical literature. Mr. Adams has confined himself strictly to the career of his hero; but the life of Gallatin from 1801 to 1815 is the cabinet history of the administrations of Jefferson and Madison. This period is still but little known

[1] *The Life of Albert Gallatin*, by Henry Adams, vol. i. *The Writings of Albert Gallatin*, edited by Henry Adams, vols. ii., iii.

except from the Federalist standpoint, and the history of an opposition is never very conclusive as to that of the government. There is no life of Mr. Madison covering these years, and of all the many lives of Jefferson there is not one which approaches the subject in a manner at once unprejudiced and thorough. Gallatin was the only other important member of their administrations, and his biography now throws a flood of light from the Democratic side over the history of the United States during the first fifteen years of the century.

Mr. Adams shows himself to be peculiarly fitted for his task. Patient investigation is everywhere apparent, and is supplemented by a firm historical grasp, and by vigor and originality of thought and opinion. The most conspicuous quality, however, is the author's marked impartiality. We do not agree with all Mr. Adams's conclusions, but no one can question the fairness of the process by which they have been reached. The cool, judicial tone of the book, free alike from excessive laudation or excessive censure, is very refreshing to the reader of American biography, and renders both praise and blame, when they are meted out, very effective.

It would be difficult to find a better subject politically, but from the dramatic side it is not equally strong. Gallatin's career would seem to contradict this last assertion, but it is unquestionably correct, and the explanation is easily found in the character of the man. Gallatin was a great man and a strong charac-

ter, but he was neither picturesque nor dramatic, and is never amusing. This does not affect the importance of the biography as a contribution to history, but it is a misfortune to author, hero, and reader. It tends inevitably to make the narrative too uniformly sober, — a defect which Mr. Adams does not always overcome.

Family pride led the Gallatins to boast a descent from A. Atilius Callatinus, the Roman consul (A. U. C. 494 and 498). A gap of fifteen hundred years between the consul and the first appearance of the name in European history tends to invalidate this rather splendid bit of genealogy, but there can be no doubt that the Gallatins were both an old and noble family. Their pedigree carries us back to the middle ages, whence it descends unbroken to Mr. Jefferson's secretary. They are first heard of in Savoy in the year 1258, and more than two centuries later they came to Geneva (1510), united with Calvin in his opposition to Rome, and associated their fortunes with those of the famous Swiss city. Settlement in Geneva deprived them of showy titles, but did not impair their purity of blood or high social position. For nearly two centuries they had the lion's share of the offices and the power in the little republic of Calvin, and in every position they seem to have shown faithful industry as well as a large measure of all the civic virtues. But great as their share was, Geneva offered opportunities of advancement to but a small part of the Gallatins, who were always more numerous than rich, and

so, with the national spirit of adventure, they sought their fortune in other lands and under foreign princes. A Gallatin shed his blood or gave his life in almost every important battle during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and they also obtained renown in civil as well as in military employments. We find them at Geneva, in the middle of the eighteenth century, the same republican nobles that they had been for two hundred years. They then numbered among their friends such diverse persons as Voltaire and the Landgrave of Hesse, and letters from the literary potentate and the petty German prince adorn the opening pages of Mr. Adams's memoir. Sprung from such a family, an orphan at an early age, with the prospect of a fair patrimony and surrounded by steadfast and influential friends, Albert Gallatin was one of the last men to whom emigration would seem to have been attractive or even possible. Yet before he had reached his twentieth birthday he went forth from the city of his ancestors, leaving behind him position, career, and fortune, in order to tempt fate in the New World. Despite his subsequent success, Gallatin always regarded this early abandonment of home as unwise, and late in life affirmed that he never advised but one man — his faithful friend Badollet, who joined him in America — to emigrate. There is, indeed, no adequate explanation of this important step. It was probably due to a variety of immature motives and opinions, for Gallatin's home was happy, and his relatives, although disapproving of his departure, never

treated him with anything but kindness. Love of adventure and political idealism imbibed from the writings of Rousseau are probably the most definite reasons which can now be assigned for his voluntary exile. But, however this may be, in 1780 he left his native city for the United States, and did not return to Europe until he came, full of honors, to conclude a peace between the country of his adoption and Great Britain.

He carried with him to America a fair education, plenty of hope, and a little money, but his first experiences were enough to have disheartened any man who did not possess in a high degree courage, endurance, and fortitude. He first tried his fortune in New England, where all his attempts came to nothing. He failed in trade; he passed an aimless and hard winter in the wilds of Maine; and he strove to earn a living as a teacher of French in Harvard College. But the New England atmosphere was unfavorable to a poor and young adventurer, and especially to one of French origin. So Gallatin drifted away from the compact, rigid, and rather repellent civilization of New England into the backwoods of Pennsylvania and Virginia. In a wholly new country there seemed more chances for a new man; so Gallatin engaged in land speculations, married, and was just beginning to think that life looked more promising, when his wife died after a few months of wedlock, and he was left with his misery in his rude and lonely home. He had already come forward in local politics, thanks to a training and education rare enough in the backwoods of

America, and the loss of his wife drove him into the one absorbing occupation which seemed open to him. Land speculations and rough frontier farming were desolate enough at best, and to a man bowed with his first great sorrow they must have seemed intolerable. He took refuge in politics, and his long and eventful public career began.

He came upon the stage of American politics at a decisive moment in the history of the country. The federal Constitution was before the people, and national existence was trembling in the balance. The feeling in Pennsylvania ran strongly in favor of the new scheme; but Gallatin, with the vague dislike of energetic government, which had impelled him to leave Europe, still strong upon him, cast in his lot with the minority and helped to draft some proposed amendments to the Constitution. Thus he became an anti-Federalist and one of the founders of the Republican party, to whose service he devoted the best years of his life. Elections followed to the State convention and the State legislature. By sheer force of industry and a clear, comprehensive mind, this young Swiss, unable to speak English fluently and a stranger in the land, at once raised himself to the position of a leader in Pennsylvania, and made himself respected and admired by men of all shades of politics. In the State legislature he acquired with marvelous rapidity the same extraordinary influence which he soon afterwards wielded in Congress, and there is nothing more striking in his career than the confidence in his

ability and capacity which he seems to have impressed at once upon all with whom he had to deal.

But while Gallatin was thus rising to be the foremost Republican in Pennsylvania, that portion of the State which he represented was drawn into a momentous contest with the national government. The excise laid by Hamilton was the cause of the trouble, and Mr. Adams appears to think that this measure was too strong, and that the government ought not to have endangered its existence by introducing it. Hamilton's theory, however, was simple and correct. The government needed money, and nothing of course was so proper for taxation as spirits. If a suitable and necessary tax of this kind could not be laid and collected, the sooner the government went to pieces the better, for it would have failed of its main purpose. Hamilton did not shrink from applying this test of stability at once, and events proved that he was right. Sooner or later the government would be compelled to lay an unpopular tax, and its very existence depended on its success in doing so, for there was nothing which could place the government on a firm footing so quickly as a demonstration of its ability to carry out the laws. Hamilton forced the issue, it must be admitted; but the result justified the attempt, and did more than anything else for many years to give permanency and vigor to the new scheme and to remove the doubts which any sign of weakness would have converted into aggressive and probably fatal hostility.

Gallatin came forward at once as a leader in oppo-

sition to the excise. He limited his opposition to legal means of resistance, and thus marked out for himself a dangerous and narrow path, for by such conduct he was sure to meet with reproach from all who supported the government, while the rough population which he led was ready to do anything except confine themselves to strictly lawful measures. In the midst of the conflict about the excise, Gallatin was chosen United States Senator from Pennsylvania by the votes of both political parties, and a higher compliment to character and ability has seldom been paid to any man in this country. But his new honors were short-lived. Party lines were now drawn very tightly, and the stanch Federalists of the Senate regarded with extreme disfavor this young Frenchman, whom they set down as a man of leveling principles and a leader of insurrection against the government. They therefore took advantage of a technical doubt as to his citizenship, annulled his election, and sent him back to private life with a halo of political martyrdom.

Meantime the resistance to the excise was rapidly coming to a crisis, and the time came for Gallatin to confine that resistance within legal limits. He failed, of course. He had sown the wind, and for a few weeks he had the pleasure of reaping the usual harvest. Mr. Adams has made very clear the law-abiding nature of Gallatin's opposition, and there is no more exciting passage in his career than when with splendid courage he faced an armed and excited crowd of wild frontiers-men at Redstone Old-Fort, and at the risk of

his life denounced the cherished plans of his hearers. Although he failed to prevent insurrection and riot, he succeeded in breaking their force in season to avoid bloodshed, but he was only just in time. Hamilton and Washington had at last determined to move, and stake the success of their experiment upon the result; and when they did act, it was with such energy and vigor that the issue was certain. Hamilton's bold policy prevailed, and the Pennsylvania rebellion faded helplessly away before an overwhelming force. The courage, manliness, and upright intentions of Gallatin in this rather sorry business of the "whiskey rebellion" have been made perfectly clear by Mr. Adams; but his mistakes at this time also come out very distinctly in the biography. When one encourages legal resistance to an established government, some account should be taken of the character of the population. This Gallatin either did not do, or else he failed to understand his constituents. When he found what he had let loose, he threw himself into opposition, and contributed largely to make the "whiskey rebellion" abortive and rather ludicrous instead of extremely tragic as it might well have been. Gallatin has paid the penalty for his mistake, by appearing to posterity as a leader in the first revolt against our national government. Mr. Adams has relieved him from all shadow of wrong intention; yet it is to be feared that the popular conception of Gallatin as the leader and fomenter of rebellion will never be wholly dispelled.

But however much Gallatin may now suffer from his connection with the Western insurrection, it is certain that he profited greatly from it at the moment. He was almost the only Western man who had come out of the troubles with any reputation, and the popular sense of this fact was soon shown by his election to the House of Representatives.

In this new sphere Gallatin met with the same success which had attended him in the legislature of Pennsylvania. He was preëminently endowed with a faculty of seeing things exactly as they were, a very fine quality of mental strength to which much of his success in life was due, and which told with great effect as soon as he entered the field of national politics. It has also enabled him to give accounts of himself which are simply wonderful in their exactness. As to his career in Congress, for instance, he says: —

"It is certainly a subject of self-gratulation that I should have been allowed to take the lead with such coadjutors as Madison, Giles, Livingston, and Nicholas, and that when deprived of the powerful assistance of the first two, who had both withdrawn in 1798, I was able to contend on equal terms with the host of talents collected in the Federal party, — Griswold, Bayard, Harper, Goodrich, Otis, Smith, Sitgreaves, Dana, and even J. Marshall. Yet I was destitute of eloquence, and had to surmount the great obstacle of speaking in a foreign language and with a very bad pronunciation. My advantages consisted in laborious investigation, habits of analysis, thorough knowledge of the subjects

under discussion, and more extensive general information due to an excellent early education, to which I think I may add quickness of apprehension and a sound judgment."

And we may add unflinching courage, perfect command of temper, great intellectual force, and moderation in speech toward all men. Gallatin at once took the leadership of the Republican party, and retained it during his six years in the House. That he should have wrested it from the other Republican chiefs does not seem to us so striking as it does to Mr. Adams. Madison was a great man, the greatest in Congress when his future secretary first appeared there; but he was not a strong parliamentary leader, and the rest of the Republican talent, with the exception of Edward Livingston, was trifling when compared to the force of such a man as Gallatin. Gallatin's greatest triumphs were won over his adversaries, who were then an able and numerous body; and yet as we now gather here and there Gallatin's veritable opinions on public questions, it is not easy to see wherein he differed essentially from the Federalists. In 1793, for example, he speaks of the French revolution as the cause of mankind against tyrants, but led by men greedy of power and not likely to result in good government; and although he supported Monroe and defended his conduct in Paris, Gallatin was very far from sharing the violent French prejudices of his party. At the same period, in regard to Genet he expresses the hope that all parties will unite against the arrogance of any foreign

power and be ready to fight. These were undoubtedly the views of the bulk of the Federalist party at that time, and it was the same in regard to other vital principles. Gallatin was in the opposition because he dreaded strong government and thought the Federalists leaned too much in that direction, and not at all from any radical differences such as divided Jefferson from Washington and Hamilton. "Though not quite as orthodox as my Virginia friends," he says, "(witness the United States bank and internal improvement) I was opposed to any usurpation of powers by the general government." By the very fact of birth, Gallatin could not be anything but a nationalist. In that respect he and Hamilton stood on the same ground, their opinions differing only in degree. Neither of them ever thought, as their contemporaries all did, what Virginia or Massachusetts or New York would say or do, but simply what the general policy ought to be. Gallatin was divided from the members of his party by the impassable barrier of state's rights as well as by their impracticable opposition to all the necessary machinery of successful government of which the Federalists were the champions. In a man so constituted mentally, and perfectly fearless morally, the Federalists found an adversary differing little in reality from one of themselves, and a foeman worthy of their steel. As a rule they had been used to make short work of Mr. Jefferson's followers in debate, but the appearance of Gallatin made a decided change.

His first act as a member of Congress was to assume

the vacant post of financier to the opposition, whence he preached forcibly and clearly his cardinal doctrines of economy and simplicity. The only point of real difference in this matter between him and his opponents, as he himself says, was connected with French hostilities and the policy of establishing a navy. But Gallatin did great and effective service in modifying and improving the financial schemes of the government, and incidentally built up his own financial reputation. It is impossible in a brief sketch to follow him closely though his congressional career. In every important question it was Gallatin who made the great speech of the opposition, and bore the brunt of the enemy's attacks. He was not eloquent, but he was eminently forcible and effective. Every quality, however, sinks into insignificance beside his perfect command of temper. In a bitterly personal age and in the most heated personal debates he never indulged in personalities. The temptation to do so must have been almost irresistible, for while the Federalist party had many virtues, gentle forbearance toward opponents was not among them. Gallatin was peculiarly obnoxious to them on every account, and they treated him accordingly. The Federalists had a fine command of language, especially of the language of invective, and Gallatin drew it forth freely. His birth, his French blood, his unlucky accent, and his supposed foreign sympathies were all used to lash him into fury, to discredit him with the people, and make him despised. At rare intervals Gallatin would fire up with an

indignant retort full of keen and vigorous sarcasm, but he usually passed over in silence all assaults, whether made with the rapier or the broadsword, and stuck close to his argument and to the subject in hand. In his imperturbable self-control the Federalists found the most dangerous resistance. Such a man was seldom carried away by the heat of battle to put himself at a disadvantage, or to engage with an antagonist who clearly had the best ground. When John Marshall sat down after his great speech on the Jonathan Robbins case, the Republicans flocked around their chief and begged him to reply, but Gallatin said to them with his treacherous accent: "Gentlemen, answer it yourselves; for my part I think it unans*wér*able." The same shrewd sense and clear appreciation of facts were shown in all that related to Gallatin's action as a party leader. It was in questions of policy that he usually erred. His most extreme followers sometimes thought him a trimmer, yet it is curious to see that it was his party loyalty which induced all his mistakes. When he was acting solely in accordance with his own views he was generally right and always reasonable; when he was contending for party principles he was very apt to go wrong. His course in regard to the Jay treaty was in part, at least, an instance of the first; the navy, commercial treaties, and diplomatic relations were examples of the second. In the first instance he defended the constitutional right of the House to consider a treaty involving appropriations, but he did not urge the rejection of the one actually

in hand. In the case of the navy he fell in with the ideas of his party, and Mr. Adams makes a plausible and ingenious defense of Gallatin's course upon this question, which seems to me perfectly unsound. Mr. Adams's argument is that perfect protection of our commerce everywhere is impossible, that this was Gallatin's theory, and is the one which has ultimately prevailed. The flaw is in the assumption that the Federalists aimed at complete protection, and that they were opposed by the Republicans on the ground of impracticability. The Federalists simply wished a naval force sufficient to protect us from insult, and to act as a police on the seas and in our own and foreign harbors. This is the precise theory which is accepted to-day; and if our navy had been properly administered, this is what it would now be. The Republican party, on the other hand, did not advocate a small and efficient force for police purposes, but resisted the creation of any navy whatever. Gallatin never committed a greater blunder than in his opposition on this question, and he subsequently changed his views after a good deal of bitter experience. In the same way he altered his opinions as to commercial treaties and diplomatic relations; but the process of conversion was severe, and came only after long years of power.

The most creditable part of Gallatin's career in Congress was when his party was at its lowest point, overwhelmed by the X. Y. Z. letters and by their own advocacy of France. Most of the Republican leaders either left Philadelphia at that time or went

over to the war party. Gallatin alone remained and fought the battle wisely, temperately, and single-handed. The Federalists bore down upon him unmercifully, and sought to crush him at all hazards. They even tried to exclude him from office by amending the Constitution, but Gallatin never swerved. Alone and deserted he struggled on through the dark days of his party, determined to make a national fight in the national legislature, and relying very little upon resolutions by Kentucky and Virginia. But when everything seemed most hopeless the tide had turned. Fierce quarrels broke out in the dominant party. Negotiations were opened with France. The war party was crushed. The alien and sedition laws shocked the country, and the next election carried the Republicans into power.

Then came the election in the House. At last we know who it was that steered the Republican party through the perils that beset the country when the Federalists strove madly to elevate Burr over Jefferson. It was not Thomas Jefferson himself to whom the credit has hitherto been given, but Albert Gallatin; and we find in these volumes the careful arrangements for every emergency, and the temperance, patience, and moderation which saved the Republicans from losing not merely their rights but the sympathy of the country. There is a great debt of gratitude due to Gallatin for his wise leadership in the winter of 1801.

When Jefferson came into power, borne on the full

tide of success, there were two men who had an unquestioned right to the chief places in his cabinet, — James Madison and Albert Gallatin. Both, by habit of mind, by character and modes of thought, were really Federalists, driven by circumstances into the ranks of Democracy; and they formed with the President, who was of a wholly different type, a triumvirate which ruled the country for the next twelve years. The other members of the cabinet during that period were merely ciphers in the great account. Jefferson brought the best ability of his party into his cabinet, and nearly all there was; but it was concentrated in two men, and upon Gallatin as secretary of the treasury the heaviest burden fell, especially during the first term. Economy and payment of the debt were the main objects of both Jefferson and Gallatin; but Hamilton's system was not susceptible of much improvement, and the alterations made were insignificant. Gallatin was essentially a conservative, with no desire to change existing arrangements for the sake of change merely; but aided by a rapidly increasing revenue he was able to carry out his schemes and pay the debt in a way impossible to his predecessors. His management was skillful in the highest degree. The one problem was to get rid of internal taxes, and this could be done only by reducing expenditure in the navy, a difficulty with which Gallatin wrestled in vain. The efficiency of the navy was reduced, but not its expense; and Gallatin chafed continually at the lax management of the department. Jefferson's precious

gunboat scheme at last rendered hopeless all efforts in this direction, and the Mediterranean fund was invented to effect the old purposes under a new name. Freedom from debt was Gallatin's pole star, and all his views for six years conformed to this object. Fighting or paying the Barbary States was a mere question of cost; any action leading to war was bad, inasmuch as it was cheaper to make concessions; restrictive commercial measures were fatally expensive, and it was good economy to seize Louisiana promptly, rather than to await the settlement of doubtful points. With infinite toil he persevered, until at the end of six years the promised land seemed in sight. The debt had been paid as far as possible; a large surplus was on hand, and Gallatin had a comprehensive scheme of internal improvements ready for execution. It was at this moment that the storm of foreign war burst upon us, and the frail financial fabric, so painfully reared, came toppling to the ground.

With no unmanly regrets Gallatin set himself to make the best of what remained. He dreaded even the appearance of any sympathy with Bonaparte; he wished every proper concession in order to gain peace with England; and in season and out of season he urged the old Federalist policy of making preparations to fight effectively as soon as it was probable that we must fight. He seems to have had little sympathy with the embargo, but he strained every nerve to carry it out loyally and effectually. With this purpose he demanded stronger laws and sharper weapons. If the

embargo was to have any result it must be complete, and he had no sympathy with Jefferson's favoritism for this or that Republican governor. Congress gave him the necessary legislation. Armed with powers compared to which the alien and sedition laws seemed trivial, Gallatin — the foe of strong government, the instigator of resistance to the excise, and the friend of humanity — set himself to enforce some of the most oppressive acts ever passed by any American legislature. The conclusion was failure and defeat. Gallatin and Madison, on the accession of the latter to the presidency, could only try to extricate the country by negotiation from the snarl created by Jefferson. The Erskine affair gave a momentary breathing space, and then the clouds gathered more thickly than before.

Gallatin's position in the new administration was worse than under Jefferson. He had lost his influence in Congress and his hold upon Pensylvania, and a powerful faction, bent upon his destruction, had grown up in the Senate under the control of General Sam Smith, of Maryland, and of the attractive Giles, who snapped and barked at every first-rate man in our early history. This faction had a representative in the cabinet in the person of Robert Smith, brother and tool of the senator. They thwarted Gallatin, who was now the ruling spirit of the administration, at every turn. They defeated the bank; they threw over the commercial measures and the foreign policy; they weakened the country to the last point when war

was actually impending, and they reduced the government and its legislation to utter inanity. One of their blundering measures, however, hit the mark in France and turned the Emperor from open outrage to underhand plots. Bonaparte hoodwinked our unlucky adminstration and tricked us into war with England. That Mr. Madison should have so easily become his dupe was due to the almost insuperable difficulties of the situation, and to the old and miserable traditions of French friendship. It was a capital error, and was expiated by three years of war. France, as is well known, acted in bad faith throughout, and never intended to repeal the decrees whose revocation she announced; but the conclusive proof has been reserved for this biography. Mr. Gallatin, when minister to France, came across a decree issued from the Trianon at the very moment when pledges were being made and accepted that the old policy towards us should be abandoned. In this Trianon decree the lie was given to the ostensible action and loud protestations of the Emperor; and Mr. Gallatin comments upon it with a bitterness so unusual that it shows only too clearly how sharply he felt the treachery of which he had been the victim, and which had led to such lamentable results. But Napoleon attained his object. England refused to put faith in his unsupported promises, and the United States rushed into the war of 1812.

In the mean time the fight with the Smith faction came to a head, and Gallatin told Madison that he must

leave the cabinet. Madison was not a strong man, but he was both loyal and honorable; he accepted the alternative and dismissed Robert Smith from the secretaryship of state. Gallatin was left master of the cabinet; but his victory was dearly bought. The false measures of the administration in regard to France gave the Smiths a good ground to stand upon, and they cried loudly and pertinaciously that Robert Smith had been sacrificed out of subserviency to France. The Federalists eagerly took up the cry, and, although the feeble ex-secretary quickly sank into his native insignificance, the faction became more dangerous than ever. Thus fettered in the legislature and, thanks to the rejection of all Gallatin's measures, totally unprepared, the administration was hurried into war.

This brings us to the one act of Gallatin's life which all who admire him must wish effaced. In November, 1811, he sent in a report to Congress in which he stated that the peace revenue then necessary would be sufficient with the aid of loans for war; he also failed to state the fact that to make provision for the interest of these loans, additional taxes would be necessary, and he accepted the current estimates of war expenditure. The first statement was false; the omission in regard to the loans was vital, and the common war estimates Gallatin knew to be erroneous. Mr. Adams refers to all these matters as important omissions due to "inadvertence." That Gallatin, with his clear mind and long experience, should have

made such statements and omissions through "inadvertence" seems to me simply incredible. They went to the very root of the matter, and the financial report was able either to check or encourage the war party. Mr. Adams also says that Gallatin wished to present as favorable a showing as was consistent with truth, and bring about harmony and coöperation between Congress and the Executive, and that this was in fact Gallatin's object cannot be doubted. The whole matter may be susceptible of explanation; but as it stands it wears an ugly look and admits of but one conclusion, — that Gallatin, to gain a temporary advantage, sent to Congress a grossly deceptive report. The result was that the war party was encouraged to the point of making war and dragging the helpless administration after them, while the hostile feelings of the various factions were not in the least allayed. In the spring Gallatin tried to stay the war fever by true accounts of our finances; but the honesty came too late. Not only was war declared, but no adequate financial provisions were made; and the result in the beginning was defeat, and in the end a narrow escape from bankruptcy.

Once involved in war, however, Gallatin set his financial house in order and bent all his energy toward obtaining peace. He grasped at the Russian mediation, and went as commissioner to Europe without relinquishing the treasury. When his appointment was rejected by the Senate, he laid down the treasury and took the lead in the new commission.

With coolness, tact, and firmness he confronted the English negotiators, who were all second-rate as well as obstinate and ignorant men, and by a still greater exercise of the same qualities he managed and held together his fellow commissioners, who had strong wills and jarring characters. I cannot agree with Mr. Adams that Gallatin equaled Franklin in diplomacy, but no one in our history except Franklin can be ranked above him. Peace rewarded Gallatin's skill and persistence, and he soon after accepted the post of minister to France, — a position which he held for seven years.

In the congenial atmosphere of Paris Gallatin enjoyed all that was best in European society. He also worked hard at the business of his office, and strove with his usual perseverance and good judgment to settle the commercial relations of his adopted country with the nations of Europe. His meed of success was small, but he obtained all that was possible. He returned to America, in 1823, to find himself caught in the net-work of intrigue which had been woven about the succession to the presidency. The heir of the old triumvirate and the friend and favorite candidate of Gallatin was William H. Crawford. Gallatin was therefore forced to accept the second place on the Crawford ticket, from which, however, he was soon removed, on account of the unpopularity caused by his foreign origin and in deference to the arrangements of Mr. Van Buren. Mr. J. Q. Adams, who was finally elected to the presidency, sent him once more to Eng-

land, where he conducted another difficult and not very fruitful negotiation, and whence he returned to bid farewell forever to public life.

Accepting a position in New York, which gave him a sufficient income, Gallatin turned to the scientific pursuits for which he had great aptitude, and made in this new field a lasting renown as the founder of Indian ethnology. He continued also to exert a powerful influence upon public questions, especially upon those connected with finance; and his last efforts were the composition and distribution of pamphlets against the Mexican war. There is a certain dramatic fitness in one of the closing scenes of his life. His first great act was when he faced the Western insurgents at Redstone Old-Fort; and it was with the same undaunted spirit that he spoke, when more than eighty years old, against the annexation of Texas, in defiance of the clamors and uproar of a violent and dangerous New York mob. In 1849 his long and eventful life came quietly to a close.

I have confined myself to the occurrences most immediately connected with Gallatin's personal career, but his biography throws a strong light on other lives and characters besides his own. This is particularly the case with Thomas Jefferson, as well as with the party and the ideas of which he was the great leader and apostle. Not only are many letters from Jefferson given which have not been published before, but all his relations with Gallatin and the inmost secrets of his policy are disclosed. Mr. Adams never assails

Jefferson, but he pitilessly lays bare his conduct and actions as revealed in this new material, and nothing except his own letters and the famous "Ana" have done so much as this biography to lower Jefferson's position in history.

One of the chief questions of Jefferson's first term was in regard to the civil service. In this important matter Gallatin was what would now be called a "theorist." He wished officers of the government to have a permanent tenure and to be rigidly excluded from all political action. As soon as the new administration came in, the Pennsylvania Democrats, headed by McKean, Duane, and Leib — who was described by Gallatin as "not respectable" — raised a cry for "proscription" and "spoils." They wished to expel all the actual incumbents, in order to divide the plunder among themselves and their followers, and they sought to reward men who in the spirit of revenge had betrayed, during the previous administration, official secrets in a garbled form to the "Aurora." Against all this Gallatin set his face, and thereby raised an enemy in Duane who harassed him for years, and was a principal member of the Smith faction. In this honorable contest one would have supposed that Gallatin might have relied upon the support of his chief, but the reverse was the case. Jefferson persisted in gratifying his lowest partisans and his own party feelings so far as he could without actually revolting the public sense of decency. In 1803 it was Jefferson who wrote to Duane in a conciliatory vein that every possible re-

moval had been made, and that of three hundred and sixteen offices only one hundred and thirty remained in Federalist hands. In direct opposition to the wishes of his ablest adviser, Jefferson founded the "spoils" system, and on this important matter he differed from Jackson only in preserving some regard for appearances.

It was the same in the matter of the navy. Good management was necessary in that department in order to promote the economy and relief from taxation which lay so near Gallatin's heart, and which had been the chief weapons used against the Federalists. Jefferson not only did not enforce such management, but he saddled the navy with his preposterous gunboats, and hopelessly fettered Gallatin's movements in this direction. He wrecked John Adams's admirable naval policy without saving a dollar, and in the same way he forced through his disastrous policy of commercial warfare. Gallatin carried it out to the bitter end; and, when it failed, Jefferson deliberately abdicated his official duties and his sworn responsibility in order to throw the burden he had created upon the shoulders of his successor and of his faithful minister of finance. After the defeat of the embargo, and for the remainder of his term, Jefferson ceased to be president in aught but name, and absolutely made Madison and Gallatin conduct the government.

Worse than all, in a merely personal point of view, was his treatment of Gallatin himself. Duane, Leib, and the others of that ilk in Pennsylvania attacked

the Secretary at an early day, and waged unceasing war upon him. Yet Jefferson never showed anything but kindness to these political jackals who were yelping at the heels of his confidential adviser and the leading spirit of his administration. The poor excuse of party harmony will not serve here. Jefferson was the greatest party leader in our history, and no man was more ready or more able to enforce discipline. Aaron Burr was the principal party chief when Jefferson, contrary to the wishes of his advisers, first marked him out for destruction. He forced a quarrel with Burr, and broke him down with a dexterity which excites profound admiration if not respect. He dealt as easily with John Randolph. Yet he spared and cherished Duane. Burr was a dangerous rival, Randolph a formidable leader, Duane a useful partisan. So Jefferson deliberately sacrificed Gallatin's comfort and exposed him to all the attacks of faction, rather than displease or part with a set of low and unscrupulous allies. It would have been well for Jefferson's reputation if the life of Gallatin had remained unwritten.

The most interesting thought suggested by the book, however, is in regard to the theory which Gallatin brought with him into the Treasury Department and which he strove so manfully to establish. The victory of the democratic principle of government was assured by the election of Jefferson. It was his theory of administration which was put on trial. According to this doctrine, which was Gallatin's as well, government could be carried on upon an *a priori* theory based on

the perfectness of untrammeled human nature, in contradistinction to the Federalist theory of a government according to circumstances, with a large allowance for the action of human passion and error. If government was reduced to the utmost simplicity, debts paid and taxes abolished, and every man left perfectly free, there could hardly fail to be a political millennium, and every one would give hearty support to men who aimed with purity of motives and singleness of purpose at such a consummation. For six years all this seemed possible. Then came the stress of war and outbreaks of feeling and passion, and the whole theory was swept away. Gallatin, the enemy of strong government according to circumstances, found himself the principal supporter of this dreaded system and the chief actor in it. He performed his part extremely well; but his fine Utopia was gone. Circumstances and humanity were too much for his theory, though not for him; and they completely crushed Jefferson. Federalist methods triumphed after their aristocratic theory had failed, and nothing that has been written goes farther in showing that the Federalists, from 1789 to 1801, were the ablest political party this country has ever seen than the Life of Albert Gallatin.

Of Gallatin personally much might be said, for he had a strong and interesting character. He curiously resembles the sons of the Puritans whom he so much opposed, for the faith of Calvin seems to have produced a type in Geneva very similar to that of Massachusetts. There is no trace of French vivacity in Gallatin's cor-

respondence, and his letters, indeed, might have been written by the gravest of the Federalists. There is a marked austerity in his morals, in his reverence for domestic life, and in his tender love of wife and children; and there is throughout the same unbending courage and tenacity of purpose which distinguished the people of New England. But here the resemblance ends. The reckless audacity, the capacity for being "good haters," the narrowness of mind so common in the English Puritans and their descendants, are not found in Gallatin. He was self-contained, cool, and reticent to an extraordinary degree; and he never gave way to bursts of passion, or raged with savage invective against his enemies. In these qualities he was conspicuous, and they are among his most admirable traits. His place in the scale of ability may be easily assigned. He was not so great a man as Hamilton, with whom he must inevitably be compared. He lacked the fire and brilliancy as well as the dashing energy and impassioned temperament of the great Federalist. He made fewer mistakes than Hamilton, yet he did not achieve a like success; but he seems to have been, on the whole, the strongest man in his own party. He had not the suppleness and skill of Jefferson, nor the keen legal mind of Madison. He lacked, too, the warm human sympathies of the former and the gentle, winning nature of the latter, while his cold reserve repelled to such a degree that he never aroused the affection of the people or of those about him. But he had a stern courage which was wanting in Jeffer-

son, and the strength so much needed by Madison. In mere intellectual vigor he surpassed the first, and he was quite the equal of the second.

Just, temperate, wise, and of high intellectual power, Albert Gallatin may be fitly ranked as one of the great men of American history. The proof lies in his long and honorable public life, and in his eminent and manifold services to the country of his adoption.

DANIEL WEBSTER.

In the year 1835 Richard Cobden traveled for a month in the United States, and some of his observations upon what he saw and heard there are recorded in his biography, lately published by Mr. Morley. Mr. Cobden sets down, among other things, as the best example he could give of the wild extravagance of American brag, the following anecdote: "Judge Boardman, speaking of Daniel Webster, said, quite coolly and without a smile, — for I looked for one very closely, thinking he joked, — 'I do not know if the great Lord Chatham might not have been his equal, but certainly no British statesman has, since his day, deserved to be compared with him.'" Comment upon a statement so perfectly monstrous appeared to Mr. Cobden not merely superfluous, but preposterous. To one of the controlling minds, and one of the most liberal men of modern England, it seemed that only the maddest vanity would think of even mentioning Daniel Webster in the same breath with great English statesmen. Yet if we were now to somewhat modify Judge Boardman's statement, and say that since the death of Charles Fox no English statesman, except Mr. Gladstone, has been the in-

tellectual equal of Daniel Webster, few persons whose opinion is worth anything would be likely to dissent.

Nearly half a century has elapsed since Mr. Cobden recorded this anecdote and sent it across the water to his brother, and thirty years have come and gone since the day when the eager attention of this nation was concentrated upon the death chamber at Marshfield. Of late there has been a revival of interest in Webster, indicated by new editions of his speeches, by published reminiscences, by the statue in New York, and now by the observances which have just marked the centennial anniversary of his birth.[1] It is therefore not unfitting, perhaps, to attempt at this time a historical estimate of Webster's character and career. Under ordinary circumstances the period thus involved would be too near to us for critical history in any form, but the intervening war has riven a chasm so deep and wide between that time and this that the events of Webster's life belong to a different era, almost as much as the downfall of the Federalists in 1800, or the war with England in 1812. But this is not enough. In order to reach a purely historical judgment of Webster, — which is the only one worth seeking, for there has been an abundance of others, of every degree of merit, — we must approach him historically. We must come to him neither from the point of view of those whose feelings found their best expression in the noble lines of "Ichabod," nor, on the other hand, from that of the men

[1] January 18, 1882.

> "That had loved him so, followed him, honored him,
> Lived in his mild and magnificent eye,
> Learned his great language, caught his clear accents,
> Made him their pattern to live and to die."

We must seek the Webster of history with the open mind of the generations to which he is, for the most part, only a great name and a great tradition; and seeking in this spirit we can find him, as he still lives, and as he will always live, in his speeches, arguments, letters, and state papers; in the biographies and anecdotes of friends; in the eulogies of admirers, and in the attacks of his enemies.

There is no need to rehearse in detail the events of Webster's early life. He sprang from a pure, hardy, and very typical Puritan stock, a family of borderers, possessing in the highest degree the stubborn tenacity of New England which had enabled them in the struggle with earth, air, and man, savage and civilized, to wring a bare subsistence from their granite hills. Webster's father was an Indian fighter, one of Rogers's famous rangers in the old French war, and a captain in the revolution. Education had been sacrificed by him to the trade of arms, and he determined that this loss should be spared to one at least of his sons. In accordance with this resolve he selected Daniel, his youngest boy, who was slender, delicate, and unfitted for the hard toil of the fields, and sent him to school and to college. Every one is familiar with the touching affection of the son thus favored, who, not content with his own good fortune, turned

back to draw his elder brother after him into learning's road, at the cost of much to himself and of fresh privations on the part of the devoted parents. Study of the law followed graduation, all accompanied by a dire struggle with the most pinching poverty, until at last the brothers managed to go to Boston, where the younger one was fortunate enough to obtain a clerk's place in the office of Christopher Gore. Here Webster acquired much knowledge of his profession, and had the benefit also of the society of a cultivated man of the world, a ripe lawyer, an experienced public man, and a fine gentleman in the best and truest sense of the term, whose high-bred face looks benignly upon us from one of Stuart's canvases. Webster's mind was sure to expand beneath such influences, and, thanks to Mr. Gore, he put aside the temptation of a clerkship in the courts, which would have given him immediate independence, and very probably might have checked his career. Wiser, if not richer, Webster returned to New Hampshire, and began the conflict of life and the practice of the law in the little town of Boscawen, whence he soon removed, to Portsmouth, the chief town of the State. There he married, and passed nine happy years in the pursuit of his profession, meeting in Jeremiah Mason an antagonist who taught him much, and forced the development of the powers of mind which speedily placed him at the head of the little bar of his native State.

In 1812 Mr. Webster was elected to Congress, and took his seat in May, 1813, at the extra session. Up to

this time he had taken no more interest in politics than was natural to any intelligent and active man in a period of strong political excitement. When he entered public life Mr. Webster may be described as a firm but moderate Federalist. He was strongly opposed to the embargo and to the war, but when war was once declared he was not prepared to go on with the extreme Federalists in a bitter and unrelenting resistance to all measures of the administration. Young as he was, and new to public life, he came at once to the front with that masterful spirit which never left him, introducing at an early day a resolution designed to compel a disclosure of the origin of the war, and supporting his motion with a force which placed him at once among the leaders of the House, then numerous and distinguished. At the close of the war, when the Democratic party, floundering in a chaos of unpaid debts and disordered finances, was clamoring for a bank as loudly as they had before cried out against the one devised by Hamilton, Mr. Webster again took a most conspicuous part in opposition to the scheme of Mr. Calhoun, which threatened a wild inflation of the currency and an increase of existing difficulties. In a speech of singular clearness and merit he showed very plainly that in his years of political inactivity he had read and meditated deeply; that he had classified and arranged his thoughts, and had accumulated stores of knowledge from which his retentive memory could at will draw forth weapons for the contest. In 1816 he led the opposition to Mr. Calhoun's tariff in another forcible

and able speech. Mr. Webster belonged in this respect not to the school of Hamilton, but to that of the New England Federalists, who, while they had favored moderate protection in a few well-ascertained directions, were, in the light of their own commercial interests, very averse to anything like a general protective policy or an extensive tariff.

These speeches and the position attained by Mr. Webster in Congress gave him necessarily a very great increase of reputation, but the field open to him in New Hampshire was manifestly too small, and could not yield him an income sufficient to provide for the needs of a growing family. Soon after his tariff speech, therefore, Mr. Webster removed to Boston, left Congress, and devoted himself to the pursuit of his profession.

This temporary withdrawal to private life brought fresh successes, greater than anything achieved as yet by Mr. Webster as a public man. His career in Congress had opened to him a practice in the Supreme Court of the United States, and before that tribunal at Washington, in the year 1819, he appeared as counsel for Dartmouth College, in defense of their charter rights. The argument then delivered placed him at once at the head of the bar of the United States, and fixed his reputation as one of the greatest of our constitutional lawyers. This famous case was the source and forerunner of others of like character and importance, which came to Mr. Webster at intervals throughout his whole subsequent career, and which were pre-

sented by him with equal success and ability, although he never, perhaps, surpassed his first great effort.[1]

To every one competent to judge, that argument, with its easy flow of what one of its hearers called "pure reason," is familiar. It exhibits grasp, breadth, and smoothness; it is logical and strong; it has, in short, everything that a constitutional argument of the highest order should possess. The one quality, perhaps, for which it is preëminent, is felicity of presentation. The various facts and groups of facts, with the many arguments and branches of argument flowing from them, are so arranged and conjoined that the chain of reasoning runs out without check or hindrance, and the listener passes from one subject to another, conscious only of the unbroken connection of thought, and of the close way in which one statement sustains and upholds another.

A year after the delivery of this argument, Mr. Webster, in another field, achieved an equal if not a greater success by his oration at Plymouth, in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the landing of the Pilgrims. This address belongs to a branch of the art of oratory which is neither parliamentary, political, nor legal, but approaches most nearly, perhaps, to a lay sermon, with the incident of the day or the cause of the celebration as a text. To

[1] The cases of Gibbons *v.* Ogden, Ogden *v.* Saunders, and that growing out of the Rhode Island rebellion, will occur at once to every one as giving rise to some of the most memorable among Mr. Webster's constitutional arguments in court.

that text the orator may stick closely, or he may deal in a general way with any and every subject of human interest, social, moral, or political; or, if he chooses, he may start, like Sir Walter Raleigh's history, at the beginning of the world, and come down, frequently plunging headlong, like Phaeton, to the earth of the present hour. Addresses of this sort offer a great temptation to survey mankind from China to Peru, and with most men, in attempts of this kind, the vision becomes indistinct, the outlines confused, and the historical and literary perspective very faulty. To Webster this wide scope was peculiarly attractive, and he was one of the rare men who could use it well. The oration which he delivered at Plymouth, in the first flush of his splendid powers, and with the consciousness of the resources of his strength still untouched and unexplored, was the first of a brief series of similar productions, which have established his position as a great master in what, for want of a better name, may be called occasional oratory. The address at Plymouth is not, perhaps, quite so fine, as a whole it is not so rounded and complete, as one or two of the later ones, but it possesses, nevertheless, all Webster's characteristics in this field of eloquence, where his work is well worthy of study. The most striking quality of all these speeches is the grand sweep with which the orator passes over each and every subject. Yet with all this there is never the slightest pretense of universal knowledge. If he is dealing with history, of which he was very fond, it is with the ease and

grace of a statesman, scholar, and man of the world, but with no affectation of abtruse learning. If the subject is science, as in the address before the Mechanics' Institute, there is no yielding to the strong temptation to behave like Lord Brougham, and make a show of boundless knowledge by a glittering display of superficial and inaccurate information. It is the speech of a man of education and natural eloquence dealing with scientific topics in the general way which is becoming to one who is not a special student. In all these orations Webster moves easily on a high level of thought and feeling, and when he rises to a more impassioned strain it is with a pinion so strong that he carries us up with him, and brings us back without jar or shock. There is always the same clear presentation of ideas which is to be found in all his works, so that, while it seems as if the subject or the question must be very plain, the real secret of the lucidity and smoothness lies in the method in which the topics are handled. This clearness of arrangement is joined with a severe simplicity of style. The men of that day were versed in the rolling periods of the end of the eighteenth century, and were most familiar with the English of Johnson and Gibbon. In Webster's writings there are no traces of these influences. Whether he was saved from them by a youthful fondness for Addison, or by the example of plain, direct speech afforded him at the bar by Mr. Mason, saved from them he surely was. His sentences are never gorgeous, never loaded or involved. They are simple, nervous, com-

pact. In his occasional orations, and in his political speeches as well, there occur, of course, many rhetorical passages. Some of them, if detached from the context, seem even florid in thought, if not in expression. But when they are read in connection with the whole speech, and with due attention to the subject, they will be found to comply with what is the rule of good oratory as of good architecture, in being ornaments to the construction and not constructed ornament. We are told that he was an unsparing censor of everything he published, and that he weeded out Latin derivatives with an unsparing hand. He certainly clung closely to Anglo-Saxon words, but we doubt if revision could have found much to alter. From this practice he made one constant and, under the circumstances, very singular deviation: he invariably uses "commence" instead of "begin,"— a vicious habit, and all the more noticeable from its recurrence in the midst of a style in every other respect simple and pure in a remarkable degree.

In a similar way he is very sparing of imagery and metaphor, using them but seldom, and always with great point and effect. This was due to the same austerity of taste which is apparent in his style, not to any lack of imagination, for Webster had both the dramatic and poetic sense strongly developed. Tradition tells us that he was often highly dramatic in voice and manner, at times perhaps too much so, but there is no extravagance of language or thought. The supposed speech of John Adams and the address

to the survivors of the revolution at Bunker Hill beginning, "Venerable men," to take two well-known instances, are very dramatic, but they are neither forced nor theatrical. It was the same on the poetical side; for, although Webster was a poor versifier, he had a genuine vein of poetry. Take, for example, that most familiar sentence at the laying of the corner-stone of Bunker Hill monument: "Let it rise! Let it rise, till it meet the sun in his coming; let the earliest light of the morning gild it, and parting day linger and play on its summit." The thought and picture are alike poetical, and they are expressed in the simplest of English words, a rare combination, — so rare that we are wont to call it Shakespearean, and so easy in appearance that many persons think any one can effect it, and hold to that belief until they make the experiment themselves.

The Plymouth oration was widely read, and gave a national fame to its author, who, at the same time, by his services in the constitutional convention of Massachusetts, was again brought conspicuously forward as a statesman and legislator possessing a profound and ample knowledge of organic questions of government and a rooted conservatism of temperament. All this bore fruit in a general wish for Mr. Webster's return to public life, and in 1823 he was elected to Congress by the Boston district. Again in Washington he vindicated his reputation as an orator by his speech on the Greek revolution, a subject which invited a display of rhetoric upon the struggle for freedom then

maintained by the inheritors of the brilliant history and traditions of Greece. But Mr. Webster spoke simply as a statesman urgent to have the United States take strong ground, and such as became them, against the doctrines of the Holy Alliance and the Congress of Laybach, which struck at the very foundations of the American system, and ought not, therefore, to be passed over in silence. The speech had the effect which was intended in defining the position of the United States, and it brought out for the first time Webster's conception of the relations of his country to other nations, and of her importance and meaning in the affairs of civilized mankind.

In the years which immediately followed, Mr. Webster stood at the head of the hard-pressed forces of the administration during the presidency of Mr. Adams, but a wider field and a position of more dignity were soon opened to him. In 1827 he was elected by the legislature to represent Massachusetts in the Senate, where his first important speech was delivered in support of the tariff of 1828. In 1816 and in 1824 Mr. Webster had displayed great ability in opposing the tariff, and had in fact headed the resistance to a protective policy; so that the change of opinion which led him to defend the tariff of 1828 was used then and subsequently, by his enemies, to found a charge of inconsistency and time serving. Mr. Webster's position in 1828 was the one which he afterwards maintained to the close of his life, and was perfectly defensible. He said substantially, "New England has

steadily and consistently resisted protective measures, but you of the South and West have insisted upon them. You have passed the embargo laws, and you brought on the war of 1812; and not content with this, you have enacted two tariff laws. The result has been to force the enterprise and the capital of New England into new channels, and to create a large number of industries. Tired of the experiment, you now propose to destroy the legislation to which New England has conformed, and force her to another change which would involve losses and disaster." The argument was logical, and, as a representative of New England, Mr. Webster's position was impregnable. The tariff of 1828, however, led to a struggle upon other issues which quite overshadowed the original cause. Out of the tariff came the resistance of South Carolina to the laws of the United States, and the doctrine of nullification formulated by Mr. Calhoun. This theory of disintegration and disunion for the first time found open expression and bold advocacy in a debate arising unexpectedly upon a harmless resolution concerning the public lands. Its exponent was Mr. Hayne, who has gained an enduring, if unenviable fame from having been crushed on this occasion by Mr. Webster. Hayne was, nevertheless, a man of much ability, young, fluent, and filled with the ideas of the Atlas of the slave world, who sat by and watched the conflict from the chair of the vice-president. His first speech went beyond the limits of the resolution, touching severely on New England,

and hinting strongly at state resistance. To this Mr. Webster replied, and Hayne then responded at length, denouncing New England with increased vehemence, and boldly advocating the nullification doctrine. The next day, before a crowded audience, Mr. Webster answered him in a speech which stands unequaled in the annals of American debate, and is one of the masterpieces of English oratory. This great speech offers no loop-hole for criticism. In elevation of tone, in fitness to the imperial theme, in range of thought, patriotism, imagination, and style, it is all that the most exacting taste could demand. It has all the qualities of Mr. Webster's occasional speeches, together with those other attributes which are required by debate. Mr. Webster made many other great speeches in Congress, but no one can doubt that he would be content to have his standing as a parliamentary orator determined by the reply to Hayne. That speech was delivered when he was in the prime of manhood and in the full vigor of his strength. His personal appearance, his voice and manner, then as always greatly enhanced the effect of everything he said. The slender boy, unfit for the labor of the farm, had developed into a man of large and commanding presence. Although Mr. Webster was less than six feet in height, every artist has portrayed him as of almost heroic stature. The fact was that he impressed all who saw and heard him as of gigantic mould. A Liverpool navvy is said to have pointed at him, in the street, and called out, "There

goes a king!" and Carlyle is reported to have said that he looked like "a walking cathedral." His head was very large, of fine shape, and with a most noble brow, beneath which great eyes looked out full of dusky light when in repose, and glowing like fires when he was excited. His massive features, black hair, and swarthy complexion, together with a manner extremely grand and solemn, all contributed to render him impressive to an extraordinary degree. His voice was one of great richness and compass, in its highest pitch never shrill, but penetrating to the remotest corner of hall or senate-chamber, and in the open air to the very outskirts of a vast crowd. When he rose to reply to Hayne he must have had, like Lord Thurlow when he answered the Duke of Grafton, and in a still greater degree, "the look of Jove when he has grasped the thunder."

The effect of this speech at the moment was overwhelming, and its results were hardly less so. It crushed the nullification theory in Congress, and forced the Southern leaders back upon the more difficult and less acceptable ground of secession. So far as argument could go, circulated as it was in that speech by tens of thousands of copies, it fixed public opinion throughout the North at least in unalterable opposition to the South Carolina doctrines, and prepared the whole country for the support of the administration in the crisis which was close at hand.

In the speeches in Congress and before political bodies, among which the reply to Hayne stands first,

Mr. Webster exhibited, as in his occasional orations, and in equal measure, the sweeping range of thought, the artistic presentation of facts and arguments, and the easy, powerful flight in the grander passages of passion or imagination for which he was always conspicuous, while at the same time he never abandoned his nervous, forcible sentences or his clear simplicity of style. In those other qualities which are peculiarly necessary in parliamentary oratory and in debate he also excelled. He had perfect readiness in reply, swiftness in attack or defense, great command of facts, and an obedient and retentive memory. He was never a maker of epigrams or a master of keen retort, and never indulged in parliamentary fencing. He did not come upon the field like the modern duelist, trusting only to skill in the use of a thin, flexible, pointed strip of steel, but, like the knight of olden time, he rode into the tournament in full panoply of glittering armor and with well-poised lance, bearing down his opponents by force, weight, and address, and never shrinking from the full shock of arms. In one respect Mr. Webster's career as a debater and orator is peculiar. He never, save in one memorable instance, when Ingersoll of Pennsylvania and Dickinson of New York assailed his integrity, gave way to denunciation of his opponents. The temptation must have been great to a man of Webster's powers to indulge in personal attacks, but he always refrained, and used the dangerous weapon of invective only against arguments and principles. With his opponents he employed a cold,

dignified, rather argumentative, and very effective sarcasm, which suggests flaying, as in the case of Mr. Hayne. Yet this sarcasm has not the bitterness which commends its victim to the listener's pity, but has rather beneath its gravity a throb of laughter and a sense of the ridiculous which keep the hearers in sympathy with the orator. This grave sarcasm, with a subtle mingling of ridicule and amusement, appears very strongly in Cicero's orations against Milo, and closely resembles the same trait in Webster. It would be difficult to say why he was so sparing in the way of humor pure and simple; certainly from no natural defect, for it abounds in his private letters, from the first exuberant epistles of youth down to the last utterances in the days of age and disappointment, while with those nearest to him the spirit of fun was always breaking out. Before the world, however, Webster was very grave and dignified, and this grave dignity waxed ever more lofty and solemn as he advanced in years and fame. Still, the natural humor crops out now and then in his speeches, veiled sometimes under stately irony, sometimes coming with more freedom and directness. One example, rather of the latter than of the former kind, occurs in a speech of the year 1838. Mr. Calhoun had been discussing the sub-treasury, had brought up slavery and the tariff, and had attacked Mr. Webster, who hurried to the Senate, being informed on the way that Mr. Calhoun was "carrying the war into Africa." Mr. Webster began his reply in a laughing way, and after a few sentences said, —

"Sir, this carrying the war into Africa, which has become so common a phrase among us, is indeed imitating a great example; but it is an example which is not always followed with success. In the first place, every man, though he be a man of talent and genius, is not a Scipio; and in the next place, as I recollect this part of Roman and Carthaginian history, — the gentleman may be more accurate, but as I recollect it, — when Scipio resolved upon carrying the war into Africa, Hannibal was not at home. Now, sir, I am very little like Hannibal, but I am at home; and when Scipio Africanus South-Caroliniensis brings the war into my territories, I shall not leave their defense to Asdrubal, nor Syphax, nor anybody else. I meet him on the shore at his landing, and propose but one contest.

'Concurritur; horæ
Momento cita mors venit, aut victoria læta.' "

In the summer of 1830, just after the great reply to Hayne, when he was probably the most conspicuous man in the country and at the very zenith of his reputation, Mr. Webster made the best known and best preserved, as well as the most brilliant, of all his many addresses to a jury. He was called in to aid the government in the famous case of the White murder at Salem. It was freely charged then, and has been generally believed ever since, that this aid was due to a heavy fee from the relatives of the murdered man, and the explanations and defense of Webster's biographer confirm the unpleasant impression that

money tainted the transaction. But, however that may be, Mr. Webster began his speech by defending himself against the insinuation that he had been brought there to "hurry the jury beyond the evidence," and then burst forth with that splendid exordium on murder general and murder particular which is in every school reader, and which as delivered by Webster was certainly calculated to terrify a jury, fill them with horror, and if necessary "hurry them beyond the evidence." After this opening he proceeded with his argument. In the most masterly manner he drew forth and reviewed the testimony, and, marshaling his facts in solid column, moved them forward in a way which must have swept every doubt from before their onward march. That Webster had an extraordinary power of convincing a jury cannot be questioned, but he must have affected them chiefly with a feeling of awe; instead of leading he must have impressed them. In those very peculiar qualities which make a man a great advocate with the twelve judges of fact; in variety and fertility, in the rapid mingling and alternation of wit and pathos, of grave argument, solemn exhortation, and quick ridicule, Webster was surpassed, it must be admitted, by both Erskine and Choate, although the latter's fame, unfortunately, rests almost wholly upon tradition. At the same time there have probably been few men who have achieved better results in the difficult task of "getting a verdict."

We have now glanced at Webster in every branch of the orator's art. In the Senate and in occasional

speeches he was at his best, and above any other American of whom we have sufficient means of judging. Mr. Everett tells us that in England Webster was compared frequently to Demosthenes, and the severity of his style and expression justifies the comparison. He was assuredly most like the great models of antiquity, and this fact takes him at once out of range of the fervors of Continental oratory. Among his kindred of England he finds more rivals and greater ones: in Chatham and Pitt, Burke, Sheridan, and Fox, Canning, Bright, and Gladstone. Fox and Webster most nearly resemble each other, for both possessed that which in the former was again and again described as a "manly eloquence." Burke was more profound, more metaphysical, richer, more various, than Webster, but no one ever said of Webster what Goldsmith did of Burke: —

> "Who, too deep for his hearers, still went on refining,
> And thought of convincing, while they thought of dining."

Webster, again, was less splendid than Sheridan, but many of the glittering sentences of the "Begums" look very dim now, and the tinsel of the "greatest speech of the age" has tarnished sadly, while Webster's classical simplicity is as pure, fresh, and glowing as when the words were uttered. There is, however, nothing to be gained in hunting comparisons. Webster has passed into history as one of the handful of men whom the world acknowledges as the great masters of eloquence.

Although before the tribunal of public opinion the reply to Hayne had given a death-blow to the doctrine of nullification, yet the heresy was still to be met as a practical question; and when Jackson took it by the throat, Webster, with true patriotism and statesmanship, laid aside his opposition to the President, which was deep and abiding on every other subject, and stood by the side of the administration in advocacy of the force bill. In a similar fashion he resisted Clay's compromise. It was not, as Webster firmly believed, a question of a tariff, but of the supremacy of law and the maintenance of the Union. Modify the tariff, and the victory lay with the rebellious State. When South Carolina was on her knees and the law enforced throughout her borders, then would be the time to talk of modifications. Compromise prevailed, but Webster had no cause to blame himself for any part in the perilous concession.

Jackson's administration and that of his successor cover the most brilliant years of Mr. Webster's life. He was then in the full maturity of his powers, fighting for the Constitution and for sound finance, the leader of a new and growing party, wholly in the right on the public issues of the day, and acting up to his beliefs without fear or reservation. Jackson's violent wrenching and twisting of the Constitution afforded constant opportunities for Mr. Webster to make great efforts in behalf of that which lay nearest his heart, but the absorbing question of all that time was of course the bank and the finances. The bank

was opposed to Jackson, and so Jackson undertook to stuff its offices with his adherents, as he had done in all other similar cases. The bank resisted, and then the President determined to destroy it. He began by vetoing the bill for its recharter; but this mode of destruction was so slow that, to quicken the work, he withdrew the deposits, and determined to manage the finances himself. Jackson regulating the finances and the currency was like a monkey regulating a watch. He simply smashed everything, and then went out of office, leaving his successor to make the best of it. Hampered by Jackson's principles, and coming, moreover, much too late to do any good, Mr. Van Buren was just in time to meet the financial panic of 1837, which spread ruin and disaster over the country. From the first Mr. Webster had led the opposition to Jackson's mad financiering, and had struck hard and telling blows at him and at Mr. Van Buren. He had a perfect mastery of the questions at issue and of all the intricate financial details, so that while he showed what ought to be done he predicted with unerring sagacity the exact result of Jackson's course. All that he said was read everywhere, and when the crash came, his statesmanship and foresight received a startling vindication. In the campaign, which soon ensued, against Mr. Van Buren as a candidate for reëlection, Mr. Webster stood at the head of the opposition forces, and in all parts of the country, with wonderful variety and freshness, enforced the doctrines which he had always defended, and, pointing to the

suffering of the country, denounced the policy by which all this misery had been caused. It had been a long waiting, but Jackson's outrageous policy and ignorant blunders at last had their reward. His party, his political heir and successor, and his principles of government were all overthrown, and buried by the great wave of popular disapproval which carried General Harrison to the presidency, and placed Webster beside him as secretary of state.

To enter into a discussion of Mr. Webster's course in this new field would be impossible within the limits of a necessarily brief essay. His state papers are fully worthy of him. They are able, dignified, clear, and acute in argument, and show the breadth and grasp of mind so characteristic of their author. They cover a wide range of topics, and deal with many nations, Spain, Portugal, Mexico, and the opening of diplomatic relations with China. The great event was of course the treaty with England, concluded by Lord Ashburton at Washington. That this was the work of a statesman, that it was boldly approached and as a whole wisely settled, no one now would be likely to question. At the time it was made the subject of attack, and very recently the injury it inflicted upon Maine has been ably discussed by Mr. Washburn before the historical society of that State. In the Senate, Mr. Benton, in his usual loud-mouthed fashion, stormed against it as a complete "surrender," while on the other side of the water it was fiercely assailed, and was stigmatized by Lord Palmerston as

the "Ashburton capitulation." But it must be judged as a whole, and if so judged it seems a fair treaty and a removal of differences which continually threatened war. Its only defect was the failure to provide for the northwestern boundary, which soon became troublesome and required fresh negotiations. On the settlement effected by the treaty, which set at rest questions that had endangered the peace of the country for forty years, Mr. Webster had fixed his heart. He therefore continued in office after Harrison's death and after Mr. Tyler's rupture with the Whig party. This course was made the subject of many fierce attacks, but no one now will question that Mr. Webster was right in refusing to sacrifice to the strife of party a statesmanlike policy which he had undertaken to carry through. In his grandest way, with the lofty pride which at times so became him, he gave the Whig party to understand that he could do without them, but that they could not dispense with him; and before long the Whigs came over to his views.

After leaving the cabinet in 1843, Mr. Webster had two years of private and professional life before he was again chosen to the Senate. He then came back in season for the miserable years of the Mexican war, with its schemes of conquest, all of which he opposed steadfastly and vigorously, until at last he was brought face to face with the slavery issues, growing out of the Mexican and Texan acquisitions. It was the great political crisis of 1850. Webster met it in the 7th of March speech, and failed.

From the Senate, where he was devoting himself to the support of Clay's compromise measures, he was again called to the department of state, by Mr. Fillmore. The only event of his second term of office in the cabinet was the famous Hülsemann letter. The Chevalier Hülsemann had written in a very offensive manner to Mr. Clayton, Webster's predecessor in the department, remonstrating against the official inquiry directed by the United States government in regard to the Hungarian revolution. The letter merited rebuke, and Mr. Webster administered it in a way which he himself calls "boastful and rough." Severe, and justly so, it certainly was; but the boastful passage, which at the moment so caught the popular fancy, was hardly justifiable, in point of taste, in a state paper, and was not quite worthy of Mr. Webster.

In the spring of 1852 the Whig convention assembled in Baltimore to nominate a candidate for the presidency. There was in New England, as there had been before on similar occasions, a movement in favor of Mr. Webster. Mr. Choate, who was at the head of Mr. Webster's friends in the convention, went on to Washington the day before it met. He found Mr. Webster fully possessed with the idea that he should be nominated, and that the great office was at last within his grasp. So filled was he with this faith that Mr. Choate had not the heart to tell him that there was no chance, but held his peace, and went back to lead the forlorn hope and to watch the prolonged contest which ended in the nomination of General Scott.

Even if he had been successful, it is nearly certain that Mr. Webster could not have lived much longer. As it was, the disappointment fell upon him with crushing effect. He withdrew to Marshfield, hid his face from the world, and died. He died proudly, as he had lived, but not perhaps without a touch of that affectation which Dr. Johnson said came to every man at the last hour, and which Webster had himself condemned. To the public he was silent, but he advised his intimate friends to vote for Pierce, and told them that the Whigs, as a national party, were ended. Melancholy words of farewell from a great party chief to his trusted friends and followers!

The Whig party was indeed at an end, but it was wrecked by the compromise measures and the 7th of March speech, and not by the nomination of Scott. That speech was the supreme trial of Webster's whole career, and he failed. Had he but died an hour before that chance, it had been for him a blessed time. His friends and admirers say that there was nothing new, nothing inconsistent with his past utterances, in that speech. In a certain sense, so far as opinions went, it was consistent. The trouble with the 7th of March speech was in the changed tone and attitude of the man. In 1832, when Jackson faced South Carolina, Webster stood close beside him. Then the question turned on a tariff, and Webster said: Let us have no compromises until the supremacy of the law is vindicated beyond doubt or cavil. In 1850 California stood with a free constitution in her hand, waiting for

admission, and Taylor, like Jackson, no statesman, but merely a plain American soldier, said, "Do your duty; admit California. I hear the threats of Texas; I see the boundary troubles: but admit California, and I will settle the boundaries, if need be." Taylor was right, as Jackson had been. But this time Webster did not stand by the President. He bowed before the menaces of the South, and urged a compromise. His argument against Taylor's policy proceeded on a futile distinction, and upon a dread that display of force by the general government meant disunion; whereas a bold, firm attitude on the part of the administration would, in fact, have done more for peace and for union than any compromise. Compromise meant concession to the South, and to that there was no end. In a few years the South tore up all compromises; in a few years more they plunged the country into civil war, because they lost an election. Vigor and decision would have checked the rising mischief in 1850; weakness and concession simply hastened disunion. The northern Whigs ridiculed Webster's dread of secession, but the dread was well founded. His fault lay in meeting the danger, not like a brave man, as in 1832, but with timidity and compromise.

In 1832 the question was a tariff, in 1850 human slavery. Webster had denounced the slave trade at Plymouth; he had opposed early and late the extension of slave territory; he had raised a voice of warning and denunciation against the annexation of Texas; he had resisted the acquisition of territory from Mex-

ico; he was opposed to slavery as a system; he had foreseen the magnitude of the abolition agitation when others had scoffed at it; he had felt that it was the duty of Southern statesmen to deal with the question; and now he turned about and derided the Wilmot proviso as an abstraction, sneered at the Free-Soilers as fanatics, urged compromise, and supported a new fugitive slave law with might and main. The Wilmot proviso was a declaration of principle, and, on the same grounds as Taylor's policy, it should have been supported. How could the South ever be brought to reason if they always got what they wanted by a sufficiency of angry threats? Webster's place was at the head of the free-soil movement, of the constitutional opposition to slavery. He saw, perhaps more plainly than any one, the magnitude and the inevitable character of that question, and he should have led the North in the determined purpose to deal with it and settle it in a statesmanlike way. When, instead of doing this, he cried out for compromise and concession, he seemed to the rising spirit of the North, what in fact he was, false to his race, to his past, to his principles, to himself. He became in a moment a "lost leader."

> "One task more declined, one more footpath untrod."

His failure when he came to the crucial point was complete, and was deplorable and terrible for the very reason that he was so great in intellect, so marvelous in faculty, so highly gifted, and with a past crowded with words and deeds which had become part of the

history of his country. The greater the height, the worse the fall and the deeper the censure.

Webster's course in 1850 was due to two motives: his love for the Union, and his wish to gain the favor of the South, and thereby the presidency. The first was noble, even if misguided; the second, and much the weaker, was pitiable in such a case and in such a man. Webster's love for the Union was in reality the key to his whole public career. It appears in his boyish letters, warm with youthful fervor; it burns strongly in his latest words. Webster lived during a period when the United States were in their first youth. The American people had begun to feel, in a dim way, but none the less surely, the greatness that was in them. They felt it, but others could neither see nor understand it. They were, as a nation, young, raw, inexperienced, and the consciousness of their future and of their unappreciated strength made them boastful, sensitive to the opinion of others, and full of a rough self-assertion. All this has gone. We know now, instead of feeling dimly, and self-assertion has become utterly idle, worse than vanity, to an assured greatness. Many persons, however, either silent, or capable only of crude expression, felt in this way in the first half of the present century, and to them came Daniel Webster, who saw clearly, instead of dimly, and could give fit utterance to all he saw and felt. To him the future opened with a dazzling radiance. From the height of his own intellect he beheld the land which he would never enter, but which we who

have come after him are beginning to realize in actual possession. He saw the millions who would come here, the wealth which would be won, and in the train of wealth literature, science, learning, and the arts. He saw the help to humanity, the opportunities for education and comfort, the elevation of man's condition, which would be possible here. He saw the vast influence which this country would exert, and the great place to which she was destined among the nations of the earth. All this rested on the Union, and union and nationality rested on the Constitution. This vision of futurity was the dream, the love, the adoration, of Webster's life. To this conception, as embodied in the Union and the Constitution, he poured out his soul, as the poet to his mistress. It governed his opinion on every question, foreign or domestic, as to our position toward foreign nations, as to internal improvements, and as to all the responsibilities which a destiny so lofty should impose. In every speech, almost, he brings it in, and gives to it all the poetry and imagination of his being. It always inspired him to the highest point, and it made even the fatal utterances of the 7th of March great in eloquence. At that supreme moment his courage failed him; but he believed even then that he was taking the surest way to preserve the Union and all that was dearest to his heart.

As to the second motive, the desire to obtain the presidency, that ambition had been long with him. He was pushed forward as a candidate in 1832, and

the great prize was kept always before his eyes for twenty years. In 1852 he believed the time had come. It was certainly the last chance, and we can hardly wonder at his faith. He was surrounded by devoted and admiring friends, who were drawn from the ablest, most learned, richest, and most successful men in the most highly civilized portions of the country. The quality of the admiration blinded him, increased his pride, and made him impatient of counsel or opposition. Yet even in his own party the masses were all with Clay. Webster really never had a chance for the presidency. The politicians were afraid of him, and while he awed and impressed the people he did not appeal to their sympathy. That he did not understand this was most natural; that he was led to lower himself by the belief that he might succeed was deplorable. Much charity must be extended to a man who thinks he can reach the presidency. As Lincoln said, in homely phrase, "No one knows how that worm gnaws until he has it;" and the worm gnawed at Webster's heart for twenty years. The North alone could have made him president, and he came down from his high place and bowed to the South, who received him only to throw him aside. In wrath of spirit he advised his friends to support the party he had always resisted, the party of slavery and secession. The waters of bitterness went over him, and the sun of his greatness set in clouds.

In private life Webster had all the qualities which make such a man peculiarly attractive. Cold, digni-

fied, in his later days solemn even, in public and before the world, in the midst of his family, or with his intimate friends, he unbent completely, pushed politics and cares of state aside, and gave rein to talents for conversation which corresponded with the richness and strength of his mind. Wit, wisdom, anecdote, learning, humor, and a boyish fun all mingled in his talk. In the field with his farmers, on the shore or on the sea, fishing or shooting, with his boatman or with some congenial companion, he had a large, unstudied ease of manner; while with the simple country people who lived about his home, with his servants or dependents, in his letters and in his talk there is a constant flow of humor and a pleasant grace which pervades even the dry instructions as to the management of the farm. In the close intimacy of the family circle these qualities were displayed in even greater measure, and upon all connected with him by ties of blood or friendship he poured out the wealth of his affection. He was called upon to bear much sorrow. Grief for the death of his first wife, the wife of his love and youth, and for the loss of his children, stirred to their depths his strong emotions, and shook him in a way which we are told was terrible to witness.

It would be pleasanter to every one to stop here, with his generosity, his fascination of talk and manner, and his warm affections, but his admirers and biographers, by denial or silence, compel us to glance at darker shades of character. It has been considered fitting and wise to deal in this way with the notori-

ous fact of Webster's occasional excessive indulgence in wine, and with his reputation in respect to the other sex, which popular report, at least, stamped as far from pure and honest. No one wishes to rake among the failings of a great man in these directions, and there is very rarely any reason to do so, but it is even less fitting to seek to cloak them with silence or vain denials. The proper and manly way is to mention them, admit them if they should be admitted, regret them, and have done.

Webster had, however, one grievous failing, which cannot be passed over in this way, and which his principal biographer felt called upon to discuss at length, as it had been openly assailed in Congress. This was his constant acceptance from personal or political friends of large gifts of money. At one time it was an annuity, at another a few thousands for the expenses of his table; private subscriptions to pay his debts were at all times painfully common, and, unless he is fearfully belied, he would not unfrequently draw upon his friends for large sums, which soon after appeared among the debts to be paid again by subscription. But putting aside everything which is not susceptible of immediate and absolute proof, when we read in the pages of a foreign historian of the acceptance of the sum of seven thousand dollars from a Washington banker, as a token of admiration for the 7th of March speech, and then think who and what Mr. Webster was, it makes us shudder. It was not only neither delicate nor high-minded, but it was utterly

wrong. Mr. Webster made enough money as a lawyer to live as became him. If he could not continue in public life except as the pensioner of State street, then he had no business to be in public life at all; and the decision of the question was with Mr. Webster alone, and cannot be foisted off on State street. It is said that he was not influenced by these gifts, and this I believe to be perfectly true. Mr. Webster's attitude, with the modifications of civilization, was that of a feudal baron. He protected his supporters' interests as the baron did his peasantry, and then levied tribute from them. The baron took what he wanted with the armed hand. Webster took what he wanted by his services, his overshadowing personality, and his great intellect, and at a fitting moment acknowledged the aid by a magnificent compliment to the donors, individually or collectively. The principle in the two cases was about the same. It was rather predatory and very wrong and unbecoming, but it was not a question of improper influence; it was simply a stain upon the character of a great man.

When Webster failed, it was a moral failure. Moral weakness was the cause of the acceptance of money and of the fall of the 7th of March. Intellectually, he ranks among the greatest men of his race or country. His mind was not profoundly original, nor did he have that unknown subtle quality, rarely met with among statesmen or lawyers, but to be found in poets and artists, which men have agreed to call genius. We watch the feats of some superb athlete, and

all that he does is impossible to us, far beyond our reach; but we understand how everything is done, and what muscles are needed. We observe the performances of an Eastern juggler; we see the results, we appreciate the skill, but the secret of the trick escapes us. This is true also of mental operations; it is the difference between the mind of Shakespeare and that of Pitt, a difference, not of degree, but of kind. Webster belongs to the athletes. We can do nothing but admire achievements so far beyond our grasp, and gaze with wonder upon a development so powerful, so trained, so splendid. But we can understand it all, both the mind and its operations. It is intellect raised to any power you please, but it is still an intellect, a form and process with which we are familiar. There is none of the baffling sleight of hand, the inexplicable intuitions of genius. Webster has been accused of appropriating the fruits of other men's labors to his own uses and glory. This is perfectly idle criticism. He had the common quality of greatness, a quick perception of the value of suggestions and thoughts put forth by other men, and the capacity to detect their value and use them; making them yield fruit instead of remaining barren in the hands of the discoverer. But after all is said, we come back to the simple statement that he was a very great man; intellectually, one of the greatest men of his age. He is one of the chief figures of our history, and his fame as a lawyer, an orator, and a statesman is part of that history. There he stands before us, grandly, vividly,

with all his glories and all his failings. The uppermost thought, as we look at him, is of his devotion to the Union, and of the great work which he did in strengthening and building up the national sentiment. That sentiment, the love of Webster's life, proved powerful enough to save the Union in the hour of supreme trial. There is no need, and it would not be right, to overlook or to forget his errors and failings, all the more grievous because he was so gifted. Yet all men, even those who censure him most severely, acknowledge his greatness. But it is not his fame which will plead most strongly for him when his faults are brought to the bar of history to receive judgment. It will be the thought of a united country the ideal of his hopes, the inspiration of the noblest efforts of his intellect, which will lead men to say, even where they condemn, "Forgive him, for he loved much."

COLONIALISM IN THE UNITED STATES.

NOTHING is more interesting than to trace, through many years and almost endless wanderings and changes, the fortunes of an idea or habit of thought. The subject is a much-neglected one, even in these days of sweeping and minute investigation, because the inherent difficulties are so great, and the necessary data so multifarious, confused, and sometimes contradictory, that absolute proof and smooth presentation seem well-nigh impossible. Yet the ideas, the opinions, even the prejudices of men, impalpable and indefinite as they are, have at times a wonderful vitality and force. The conditions under which they have been developed may change, or pass utterly away, while they, mere shadowy creations of the mind, will endure for generations. Long after the world to which it belonged has vanished, a habit of thought will live on, indelibly imprinted upon a race or nation, like the footprint of some extinct beast or bird upon a piece of stone. The solemn bigotry of the Spaniard is the fossil trace of the fierce struggle of eight hundred years with the Moors. The theory of the Lord's day peculiar to the English race all over the world is the deeply branded sign of the brief reign of Puritanism. A certain fash-

ion of thought prevailed half a century ago ; another is popular to-day. There is a resemblance between the two, the existence of both is recognized, and both, without much consideration, are set down as sporadic and independent. We have all heard of those rivers which are suddenly lost to sight in the bowels of the earth, and, coming as suddenly again to the surface, flow onward to the sea as before. Or the wandering stream may turn aside into fresh fields, and, with new shapes and colors, seem to have no connection with the waters of its source or with those which finally mingle with the ocean. Yet, despite the disappearances and the changes, it is always the same river. It is exactly so with some kinds of ideas and modes of thought, — those that are wholly distinct from the countless host of opinions which perish utterly, and are forgotten in a few years, or which are still oftener the creatures of a day, or an hour, and die by myriads, like the short-lived insects whose course is run between sunrise and sunset.

The purpose of this essay is to discuss briefly certain opinions which belong to the more enduring class. They are sufficiently well known. When they are mentioned every one will recognize them, and will admit their existence at the particular period to which they belong. The point which is overlooked is their connection and relationship. They all have the same pedigree, a marked resemblance to each other, and they derive their descent from a common ancestor. My intention is merely to trace the pedigree and narrate

the history of this numerous and interesting family of ideas and habits of thought. I have entitled them collectively "Colonialism in the United States," a decription which is perhaps more comprehensive than satisfactory or exact.

In the year of grace 1776, we published to the world our Declaration of Independence. Six years later, England assented to the separation. These are tolerably familiar facts. That we have been striving ever since to make that independence real and complete, and that the work is not yet entirely finished, are not, perhaps, equally obvious truisms. The hard fighting by which we severed our connection with the mother-country was in many ways the least difficult part of the work of building up a great and independent nation. The decision of the sword may be rude, but it is pretty sure to be speedy. Armed revolution is quick. A South American, in the exercise of his constitutional privileges, will rush into the street and declare a revolution in five minutes. A Frenchman will pull down one government to-day, and set up another to-morrow, besides giving new names to all the principal streets of Paris during the intervening night. We English-speaking people do not move quite so fast. We come more slowly to the boiling point; we are not fond of violent changes, and when we make them we consume a considerable time in the operation. Still, at the best, a revolution by force of arms is an affair of a few years. We broke with England in 1776, we had won our victory in 1782, and by the

year 1789 we had a new national government fairly started.

But if we are slower than other people in the conduct of revolutions, owing largely to our love of dogged fighting and inability to recognize defeat, we are infinitely more deliberate than our neighbors in altering, or even modifying, our ideas and modes of thought. The slow mind and ingrained conservatism of the English race are the chief causes of their marvelous political and material success. After much obstinate fighting in the field, they have carried through the few revolutions which they have seen fit to engage in; but when they have undertaken to extend these revolutions to the domain of thought, there has arisen a spirit of stubborn and elusive resistance, which has seemed to set every effort, and even time itself, at defiance.

By the treaty of Paris our independence was acknowledged, and in name and theory was complete. We then entered upon the second stage in the conflict, that of ideas and opinions. True to our race and to our instincts, and with a wisdom which is one of the glories of our history, we carefully preserved the principles and forms of government and law, which traced an unbroken descent and growth from the days of the Saxon invasion. But while we kept so much that was of inestimable worth, we also retained, inevitably, of course, something which it would have been well for us to have shaken off together with the rule of George III. and the British Parliament. This was the colonial spirit in our modes of thought.

The word "colonial" is preferable to the more obvious word "provincial," because the former is absolute, while the latter, by usage, has become in a great measure relative. We are very apt to call an opinion, a custom, or a neighbor "provincial," because we do not like the person or thing in question; and in this way the true value of the word has of late been frittered away. "Colonialism," moreover, has in this connection historical point and value, while "provincialism" is general and meaningless. Colonialism is also susceptible of accurate definition. A colony is an offshoot from a parent stock, and its chief characteristic is dependence. In exact proportion as dependence lessens, the colony changes its nature and advances toward national existence. For a hundred and fifty years we were English colonies. Just before the revolution, in everything but the affairs of practical government, the precise point at which the break came, we were still colonies in the fullest sense of the term. Except in matters of food and drink, and of the wealth which we won from the soil and the ocean, we were in a state of complete material and intellectual dependence. Every luxury, and almost every manufactured article, came to us across the water. Our politics, except those which were purely local, were the politics of England, and so also were our foreign relations. Our books, our art, our authors, our commerce, were all English; and this was true of our colleges, our professions, our learning, our fashions, and our manners. There is no need here to go into the details which show

the absolute supremacy of the colonial spirit and our entire intellectual dependence. When we sought to originate, we simply imitated. The conditions of our life could not be overcome.

The universal prevalence of the colonial spirit at that period is shown most strongly by one great exception, just as the flash of lightning makes us realize the intense darkness of a thunder-storm at night. In the midst of the provincial and barren waste of our intellectual existence in the eighteenth century there stands out in sharp relief the luminous genius of Franklin. It is true that Franklin was cosmopolitan in thought, that his name and fame and achievements in science and literature belonged to mankind; but he was all this because he was genuinely and intensely American. His audacity, his fertility, his adaptability, are all characteristic of America, and not of an English colony. He moved with an easy and assured step, with a poise and balance which nothing could shake, among the great men of the world; he stood before kings and princes and courtiers, unmoved and unawed. He was strongly averse to breaking with England; but when the war came he was the one man who could go forth and represent to Europe the new nationality without a touch of the colonist about him. He met them all, great ministers and great sovereigns, on a common ground, as if the colonies of yesterday had been an independent nation for generations. His autobiography is the corner-stone, the first great work of American literature. The plain, direct style, al-

most worthy of Swift, the homely, forcible language, the humor, the observation, the knowledge of men, the worldly philosophy of that remarkable book, are familiar to all; but its best and, considering its date, its most extraordinary quality is its perfect originality. It is American in feeling, without any taint of English colonialism. Look at Franklin in the midst of that excellent Pennsylvanian community; compare him and his genius with his surroundings, and you get a better idea of what the colonial spirit was in America in those days, and how thoroughly men were saturated with it, than in any other way.

In general terms it may be said that, outside of politics and the still latent democratic tendencies, the entire intellectual life of the colonists was drawn from England, and that to the mother country they looked for everything pertaining to the domain of thought. The colonists in the eighteenth century had, in a word, a thoroughly and deeply rooted habit of mental dependence. The manner in which we have gradually shaken off this dependence, retaining of the past only that which is good, constitutes the history of the decline of the colonial spirit in the United States. As this spirit existed everywhere at the outset, and brooded over the whole realm of intellect, we can in most cases trace its history best in the recurring and successful revolts against it, which, breaking out now here, now there, have at last brought it so near to final extinction.

In 1789, after the seven years of disorder and de-

moralization which followed the close of the war, the United States government was established. Every visible political tie which bound us to England had been severed, and we were apparently entirely independent. But the shackles of the colonial spirit, which had been forging and welding for a century and a half, were still heavy upon us, and fettered all our mental action. The work of making our independence real and genuine was but half done, and the first struggle of the new national spirit with that of the colonial past was in the field of politics, and consumed twenty-five years before victory was finally obtained. We still felt that our fortunes were inextricably interwoven with those of Europe. We could not realize that what affected us nearly when we were a part of the British Empire no longer touched us as an independent nation. We can best understand how strong this feeling was by the effect which was produced here by the French revolution. That tremendous convulsion, it may be said, was necessarily felt everywhere; but one much greater might take place in Europe to-day without producing here anything at all resembling the excitement of 1790. We had already achieved far more than the French revolution ever accomplished. We had gone much farther on the democratic road than any other nation. Yet worthy men in the United States put on cockades and liberty caps, erected trees of liberty, called each other "Citizen Brown" and "Citizen Smith," drank confusion to tyrants, and sang the wild songs of Paris.

All this was done in a country where every privilege and artificial distinction had been swept away, and where the government was the creation of the people themselves. These ravings and symbols had a terrific reality in Paris and in Europe, and so, like colonists, we felt that they must have a meaning to us, and that the fate and fortunes of our ally were our fate and fortunes. A part of the people engaged in an imitation that became here the shallowest nonsense, while the other portion of the community, which was hostile to French ideas, took up and propagated the notion that the welfare of civilized society lay with England and with English opinions. Thus we had two great parties in the United States, working themselves up to white heat over the politics of England and France. The first heavy blow to the influence of foreign politics was Washington's proclamation of neutrality. It seems a very simple and obvious thing now, this policy of non-interference in the affairs of Europe which that proclamation inaugurated, and yet at the time men marveled at the step, and thought it very strange. Parties divided over it. People could not conceive how we could keep clear of the great stream of European events. One side disliked the proclamation as hostile to France, while the other approved it for the same reason. Even the Secretary of State, Thomas Jefferson, one of the most representative men of American democracy, resisted the neutrality policy in the genuine spirit of the colonist. Yet Washington's proclamation was simply the sequel to the Declaration

of Independence. It merely amounted to saying, We have created a new nation, and England not only cannot govern us, but English and European politics are none of our business, and we propose to be independent of them and not meddle in them. The neutrality policy of Washington's administration was a great advance toward independence and a severe blow to colonialism in politics. Washington himself exerted a powerful influence against the colonial spirit. The principle of nationality, then just entering upon its long struggle with state's rights, was in its very nature hostile to everything colonial; and Washington, despite his Virginian traditions, was thoroughly imbued with the national spirit. He believed himself, and insensibly impressed his belief upon the people, that true nationality could only be obtained by keeping ourselves aloof from the conflicts and the politics of the Old World. Then, too, his splendid personal dignity, which still holds us silent and respectful after the lapse of a hundred years, communicated itself to his office, and thence to the nation of which he was the representative. The colonial spirit withered away in the presence of Washington.

The only thorough-going nationalist among the leaders of that time was Alexander Hamilton. He was not born in the States, and was therefore free from all local influences; and he was by nature imperious in temper and imperial in his views. The guiding principle of that great man's public career was the advancement of American nationality. He was called "British"

Hamilton by the very men who wished to throw us into the arms of the French republic, because he was wedded to the principles and the forms of constitutional English government and sought to preserve them here adapted to new conditions. He desired to put our political inheritance to its proper use, but this was as far removed from the colonial spirit as possible. Instead of being "British," Hamilton's intense eagerness for a strong national government made him the deadliest foe of the colonial spirit, which he did more to strangle and crush out than any other man of his time. The objects at which he aimed were continental supremacy, and complete independence in business, politics, and industry. In all these departments he saw the belittling effects of dependence, and so he assailed it by his reports and by his whole policy, foreign and domestic. So much of his work as he carried through had a far-reaching effect, and did a great deal to weaken the colonial spirit. But the strength of that spirit was best shown in the hostility or indifference which was displayed toward his projects. The great cause of opposition to Hamilton's financial policy proceeded, undoubtedly, from state jealousy of the central government; but the resistance to his foreign policy arose from the colonial ignorance which could not understand the real purpose of neutrality, and which thought that Hamilton was simply and stupidly endeavoring to force us toward England as against France.

Washington, Hamilton, and John Adams, notwithstanding his New England prejudices, all did much

while they were in power, as the heads of the Federalist party, to cherish and increase national self-respect, and thereby eradicate colonialism from our politics. The lull in Europe, after the fall of the Federalists, led to a truce in the contests over foreign affairs in the United States, but with the renewal of war the old conflict broke out. The years from 1806 to 1812 are among the least creditable in our history. The Federalists ceased to be a national party and the fierce reaction against the French revolution drove them into an unreasoning admiration of England. They looked to England for the salvation of civilized society. Their chief interest centred in English politics, and the resources of England formed the subject of their thoughts and studies, and furnished the theme of conversation at their dinner tables. It was just as bad on the other side. The Republicans still clung to their affection for France, notwithstanding the despotism of the empire. They regarded Napoleon with reverential awe, and shivered at the idea of plunging into hostilities with any one. The foreign policy of Jefferson was that of a thorough colonist. He shrank with horror from war. He would have had us confine ourselves to agriculture, and to our flocks and herds, because our commerce, the commerce of a nation, was something with which other powers were likely to interfere. He wished us to exist in a state of complete commercial and industrial dependence, and allow England to carry for us and manufacture for us, as she did when we were colonies weighed down by the clauses of the navigation

acts. His plans of resistance did not extend beyond the old colonial scheme of non-importation and non-intercourse agreements. Read the bitter debates in Congress of those years, and you find them filled with nothing but the politics of other nations. All the talk is saturated with colonial feeling. Even the names of opprobrium which the hostile parties applied to each other were borrowed. The Republicans called the Federalists "Tories" and a "British faction," while the Federalists retorted by stigmatizing their opponents as Jacobins. During these sorry years, however, the last in which our politics bore the colonial character, a new party was growing up, which may be called the national party, not as distinguished from the party of state's rights, but as the opposition to colonial ideas. This new movement was headed and rendered illustrious by such men as Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, the brilliant group from South Carolina, comprising Calhoun, Langdon Cheves, and William Lowndes, and at a later period by Daniel Webster. Clay and the South Carolinians were the first to push forward the resistance to colonialism. Their policy was crude and ill-defined. They struck out blindly against the evil influence which, as they felt, was choking the current of national life, but they were convinced that, to be truly independent, the United States must fight somebody. Who that somebody should be was a secondary question. Of all the nations which had been kicking and cuffing us, England was, on the whole, the most arrogant, and offensive; and so the young na-

tionalists dragged the country into the war of 1812. We were wonderfully successful at sea and at New Orleans, but in other respects this war was neither very prosperous nor very creditable, and the treaty of Ghent was absolutely silent as to the objects for which we had expressly declared war. Nevertheless, the real purpose of the war was gained, despite the silent and almost meaningless treaty which concluded it. We had proved to the world and to ourselves that we existed as a nation. We had demonstrated the fact that we had ceased to be colonies. We had torn up colonialism in our public affairs by the roots, and we had crushed out the colonial spirit in our politics. After the war of 1812 our politics might be good, bad, or indifferent, but they were our own politics, and not those of Europe. The wretched colonial spirit which had belittled and warped them for twenty-five years had perished utterly, and with the treaty of Ghent it was buried so deeply that not even its ghost has since then crossed our political pathway.

Besides being the field where the first battle with the colonial spirit was fought out, politics then offered almost the only intellectual interest of the country, outside of commerce, which was still largely dependent in character, and very different in its scope from the great mercantile combinations of to-day. Religious controversy was of the past, and except in New England, where the liberal revolt against Calvinism was in progress, there was no great interest in theological questions. When the Constitution went into operation

the professions of law and medicine were in their infancy. There was no literature, no art, no science, none of the multifarious interests which now divide and absorb the intellectual energies of the community. In the quarter of a century which closed with the treaty of Ghent we can trace the devolopment of the legal and medical professions, and their advance towards independence and originality. But in the literary efforts of the time we see the colonial spirit displayed more strongly than anywhere else, and in apparently undiminished vigor.

Our first literature was political, and sprang from the discussions incident to the adoption of the Constitution. It was, however, devoted to our own affairs, and aimed at the foundation of a nation, and was therefore fresh, vigorous, often learned, and thoroughly American in tone. Its masterpiece was the "Federalist," which marks an era in the history of constitutional discussion, and which was the conception of the thoroughly national mind of Hamilton. After the new government was established, our political writings, like our politics, drifted back to provincialism of thought, and were absorbed in the affairs of Europe; but the first advance on the road to literary independence was made by the early literature of the Constitution.

It is to this period also, which covers the years from 1789 to 1815, that Washington Irving, the first of our great writers, belongs. This is not the place to enter into an analysis of Irving's genius, but it may be fairly

said that while in feeling he was a thorough American, in literature he was a cosmopolitan. His easy style, the tinge of romance, and the mingling of the story-teller and the antiquarian remind us of his great contemporary, Walter Scott. In his quiet humor and gentle satire, we taste the flavor of Addison. In the charming legends with which he has consecrated the beauties of the Hudson River valley, and thrown over that beautiful region the warm light of his imagination, we find the genuine love of country and of home. In like manner we perceive his historical taste and his patriotism in the last work of his life, the biography of his great namesake. But he wrought as well with the romance of Spain and of England. He was too great to be colonial; he did not find enough food for his imagination in the America of that day to be thoroughly American. He stands apart, a great gift from America to English literature, but not a type of American literature itself. He had imitators and friends, whom it has been the fashion to call a school, but he founded no school, and died as he had lived, alone. He broke through the narrow trammels of colonialism himself, but the colonial spirit hung just as heavily upon the feeble literature about him.

In that same period there flourished another literary man, who was far removed in every way from the brilliant editor of Diedrich Knickerbocker, but who illustrated by his struggle with colonialism the strength of that influence far better than Irving, who soared so easily above it. Noah Webster, poor, sturdy, inde-

pendent, with a rude but surprising knowledge of philology, revolted in every nerve and fibre of his being against the enervating influence of the colonial past. The spirit of nationality had entered into his soul. He felt that the nation which he saw growing up about him was too great to take its orthography or its pronunciation blindly and obediently from the mother land. It was a new country and a new nation, and Webster determined that so far as in him lay it should have linguistic independence. It was an odd idea, but it came from his heart, and his national feeling found natural expression in the study of language, to which he devoted his life. He went into open rebellion against British tradition. He was snubbed, laughed at, and abused. He was regarded as little better than a madman to dare to set himself up against Johnson and his successors. But the hard-headed New Englander pressed on, and finally brought out his dictionary, — a great work, which has fitly preserved his name. His knowledge was crude, his general theory mistaken; his system of changes has not stood the test of time, and was in itself contradictory; but the stubborn battle which he fought for literary independence and the hard blows he struck should never be forgotten, while the odds against which he contended and the opposition he aroused are admirable illustrations of the overpowering influence of the colonial spirit in our early literature.

What the state of our literature was, what the feelings of our few literary men, and what the spirit with

which Webster did battle, all come out in a few lines written by an English poet. We can see everything as by a sudden flash of light, and we do not need to look farther to understand the condition of American literature in the early years of the century. In the waste of barbarism called the United States, the only oasis discovered by the delicate sensibilities of Mr. Thomas Moore was in the society of Mr. Joseph Dennie, a clever editor and essayist, and his little circle of friends in Philadelphia. The lines commonly quoted in this connection are those in the epistle to Spencer, beginning, —

> "Yet, yet, forgive me, O ye sacred few,
> Whom late by Delaware's green banks I knew;"

which describe the poet's feelings toward America, and his delight in the society of Mr. Dennie and his friends. But the feelings and opinions of Moore are of no moment. The really important passage describes not the author, but what Dennie and his companions said and thought, and has in this way historical if not poetic value. The lines occur among those addressed to the "Boston frigate" when the author was leaving Halifax: —

> "Farewell to the few I have left with regret;
> May they sometimes recall, what I cannot forget,
> The delight of those evenings, — too brief a delight,
> When in converse and song we have stol'n on the night;
> When they've asked me the manners, the mind, or the mien,
> Of some bard I had known or some chief I had seen,
> Whose glory, though distant, they long had adored,

Whose name had oft hallowed the wine-cup they poured.
And still, as with sympathy humble but true
I have told of each bright son of fame all I knew,
They have listened, and sighed that the powerful stream
Of America's empire should pass like a dream,
Without leaving one relic of genius, to say
How sublime was the tide which had vanished away!"

The evils apprehended by these excellent gentlemen are much more strongly set forth in the previous epistle, but here we catch sight of the men themselves. There they sit adoring Englishmen, and eagerly inquiring about them of the gracious Mr. Moore, while they are dolefully sighing that the empire of America is to pass away and leave no relic of genius. In their small way they were doing what they could toward such a consummation. It may be said that this frame of mind was perfectly natural under the circumstances; but it is not to the purpose to inquire into causes and motives; it is enough to state the fact. Here was a set of men of more than average talents and education; not geniuses, like Irving, but clever men, forming one of the two or three small groups of literary persons in the United States. They come before us as true provincials, steeped to the eyes in colonialism, and they fairly represent the condition of American literature at that time. They were slaves to the colonial spirit, which bowed before England and Europe. They have not left a name or a line which is remembered or read, except to serve as a historical illustration, and they will ultimately find their fit resting-place in the foot-notes of the historian.

With the close of the English war the United States entered upon the second stage of their development. The new era, which began in 1815, lasted until 1861. It was a period of growth, not simply in the direction of a vast material prosperity and a rapidly increasing population, but in national sentiment, which made itself felt everywhere. Wherever we turn during those years, we discover a steady decline of the colonial influence. Politics had become wholly national and independent. The law was illustrated by great names, which take high rank in the annals of English jurisprudence. Medicine began to have its schools, and to show practitioners who no longer looked across the sea for inspiration. The Monroe doctrine bore witness to the strong foreign policy of an independent people. The tariff gave evidence of the eager desire for industrial independence, which found practical expression in the fast-growing native manufactures. Internal improvements were a sign of the general faith and interest in the development of the national resources. The rapid multiplication of inventions resulted from the natural genius of America in that important field, where it took almost at once a leading place. Science began to have a home at our seats of learning, and in the land of Franklin found a congenial soil.

But the colonial spirit, cast out from our politics and fast disappearing from business and the professions, still clung closely to literature, which must always be the best and last expression of a national

mode of thought. In the admirable "Life of Cooper," recently published, by Professor Lounsbury, the condition of our literature in 1820 is described so vividly and so exactly that it cannot be improved. It is as follows: —

"The intellectual dependence of America upon England at that period is something that it is now hard to understand. Political supremacy had been cast off, but the supremacy of opinion remained absolutely unshaken. Of creative literature there was then very little of any value produced; and to that little a foreign stamp was necessary, to give currency outside of the petty circle in which it originated. There was slight encouragement for the author to write; there was still less for the publisher to print. It was, indeed, a positive injury, ordinarily, to the commercial credit of a bookseller to bring out a volume of poetry or of prose fiction which had been written by an American; for it was almost certain to fail to pay expenses. A sort of critical literature was struggling, or rather gasping, for a life that was hardly worth living; for its most marked characteristic was its servile deference to English judgment and dread of English censure. It requires a painful and penitential examination of the reviews of the period to comprehend the utter abasement of mind with which the men of that day accepted the foreign estimate upon works written here, which had been read by themselves, but which it was clear had not been read by the critics whose opinions they echoed. Even

the meekness with which they submitted to the most depreciatory estimate of themselves was outdone by the anxiety with which they hurried to assure the world that they, the most cultivated of the American race, did not presume to have so high an opinion of the writings of some one of their countrymen as had been expressed by enthusiasts, whose patriotism had proved too much for their discernment. Never was any class so eager to free itself from charges that imputed to it the presumption of holding independent views of its own. Out of the intellectual character of many of those who at that day pretended to be the representatives of the highest education in this country, it almost seemed that the element of manliness had been wholly eliminated; and that, along with its sturdy democracy, whom no obstacles thwarted and no dangers daunted, the New World was also to give birth to a race of literary cowards and parasites."

The case is vigorously stated, but is not at all overcharged. Far stronger, indeed, than Professor Lounsbury's statement is the commentary furnished by Cooper's first book. This novel, now utterly forgotten, was entitled "Precaution." Its scene was laid wholly in England; its characters were drawn from English society, chiefly from the aristocracy of that favored land; its conventional phrases were all English; worst and most extraordinary of all, it professed to be by an English author, and was received on that theory without suspicion. In such a guise did the most popular of American novelists and one of the most eminent

among modern writers of fiction first appear before his countrymen and the world. If this were not so pitiable, it would be utterly ludicrous and yet the most melancholy feature of the case is that Cooper was not in the least to blame, and no one found fault with him, for his action was regarded by every one as a matter of course. In other words, the first step of an American entering upon a literary career was to pretend to be an Englishman, in order that he might win the approval, not of Englishmen, but of his own countrymen.

If this preposterous state of public opinion had been a mere passing fashion it would hardly be worth recording. But it represented a fixed and settled habit of mind, and is only one example of a long series of similar phenomena. We look back to the years preceding the revolution, and there we find this mental condition flourishing and strong. At that time it hardly calls for comment, because it was so perfectly natural. It is when we find such opinions existing in the year 1820 that we are conscious of their significance. They belong to colonists, and yet they are uttered by the citizens of a great and independent state. The sorriest part of it is that these views were chiefly held by the best educated portion of the community. The great body of the American people, who had cast out the colonial spirit from their politics and their business, and were fast destroying it in the professions, was sound and true. The parasitic literature of that day makes the boastful and rhetorical

patriotism then in the exuberance of youth seem actually noble and fine, because, with all its faults, it was honest, genuine, and inspired by a real love of country.

Yet it was during this period, between the years 1815 and 1861, that we began to have a literature of our own, and one which any people could take pride in. Cooper himself was the pioneer. In his second novel, "The Spy," he threw off the wretched spirit of the colonist, and the story, which at once gained a popularity that broke down all barriers, was read everywhere with delight and approbation. The chief cause of the difference between the fate of this novel and that of its predecessor lies in the fact that "The Spy" was of genuine native origin. Cooper knew and loved American scenery and life. He understood certain phases of American character on the prairie and the ocean, and his genius was no longer smothered by the dead colonialism of the past. "The Spy," and those of Cooper's novels which belong to the same class, have lived and will live, and certain American characters which he drew will likewise endure. He might have struggled all his life in the limbo of intellectual servitude to which Moore's friends consigned themselves, and no one would have cared for him then or remembered him now. But, with all his foibles, Cooper was inspired by an intense patriotism, and he had a bold, vigorous, aggressive nature. He freed his talents at a stroke, and giving them full play attained at once a world-wide reputation, which no man of colonial mind could ever have dreamed of

reaching. Yet his countrymen, long before his days of strife and unpopularity, seem to have taken singularly little patriotic pride in his achievements, and the well bred and well educated shuddered to hear him called the "American Scott;" not because they thought the epithet inappropriate and misapplied, but because it was a piece of irreverent audacity toward a great light of English literature.

Cooper was the first, after the close of the war of 1812, to cast off the colonial spirit and take up his position as a representative of genuine American literature; but he soon had companions, who carried still higher the standard which he had raised. To this period, which closed with our civil war, belong many of the names which are to-day among those most cherished by English-speaking people everywhere. We see the national spirit in Longfellow turning from the themes of the Old World to those of the New. In the beautiful creations of the sensitive and delicate imagination of Hawthorne, the greatest genius America has yet produced, there was a new tone and a rich originality, and the same influence may be detected in the wild fancies of Poe. We find a like native strength in the sparkling verses of Holmes, in the pure and gentle poetry of Whittier, and in the firm, vigorous work of Lowell. A new leader of independent thought arises in Emerson, destined to achieve a world-wide reputation. A new school of historians appears, adorned by the talents of Prescott, Bancroft, and Motley. Many of these distinguished men were

far removed in point of time from the beginning of the new era, but they all belonged to and were the result of the national movement, which began its onward march as soon as we had shaken ourselves clear from the influence of the colonial spirit upon our public affairs by the struggle which culminated in "Madison's war," as the Federalists loved to call it.

These successes in the various departments of intellectual activity were all due to an instinctive revolt against colonialism. But, nevertheless, the old and time-worn spirit which made Cooper pretend to be an Englishman in 1820 was very strong, and continued to impede our progress toward intellectual independence. We find it clinging to the lesser and weaker forms of literature. We see it in fashion and society and in habits of thought, but we find the best proof of its vitality in our sensitiveness to foreign opinion. This was a universal failing. The body of the people showed it by bitter resentment; the cultivated and highly educated by abject submission and deprecation, or by cries of pain.

As was natural in a very young nation, just awakened to its future destiny, just conscious of its still undeveloped strength, there was at this time a vast amount of exuberant self-satisfaction, of cheap rhetoric, and of noisy self-glorification. There was a corresponding readiness to take offense at the unfavorable opinion of outsiders, and at the same time an eager and insatiable curiosity to hear foreign opinions

of any kind. We were, of course, very open to satire and attack. We were young, undeveloped, with a crude, almost raw civilization, and a great inclination to be boastful and conceited. Our English cousins, who had failed to conquer us, bore us no good will, and were quite ready to take all the revenge which books of travel and criticism could afford. It is to these years that Marryat, Trollope, Hamilton, Dickens, and a host of others belong. Most of their productions are quite forgotten now. The only ones which are still read, probably, are the "American Notes" and "Martin Chuzzlewit:" the former preserved by the fame of the author, the latter by its own merit as a novel. There was abundant truth in what Dickens said, to take the great novelist as the type of this group of foreign critics. It was an age in which Elijah Pogram and Jefferson Brick flourished rankly. It is also true that all that Dickens wrote was poisoned by his utter ingratitude, and that to describe the United States as populated by nothing but Bricks and Pograms was one-sided and malicious, and not true to facts. But the truth or the falsehood, the value or the worthlessness, of these criticisms are not of importance now. The striking fact, and the one we are in search of, is the manner in which we bore these censures when they appeared. We can appreciate contemporary feeling at that time only by delving in much forgotten literature; and even then we can hardly comprehend fully what we find, so completely has our habit of mind altered since those days. We

received these strictures with a howl of anguish and a scream of mortified vanity. We winced and writhed, and were almost ready to go to war, because English travelers and writers abused us. It is usual now to refer these ebullitions of feeling to our youth, probably from analogy with the youth of an individual. But the analogy is misleading. Sensitiveness to foreign opinion is not especially characteristic of a youthful nation, or, at least, we have no cases to prove it, and in the absence of proof the theory falls. On the other hand, this excessive and almost morbid sensibility is a characteristic of provincial, colonial, or dependent states, especially in regard to the mother country. We raged and cried out against adverse English criticism, whether it was true or false, just or unjust, and we paid it this unnatural attention because the spirit of the colonist still lurked in our hearts and affected our mode of thought. We were advancing fast on the road to intellectual and moral independence, but we were still far from the goal.

This second period in our history closed, as has been said, with the struggle generated by a great moral question, which finally absorbed all the thoughts and passions of the people, and culminated in a terrible civil war. We fought to preserve the integrity of the Union; we fought for our national life, and nationality prevailed. The grandeur of the conflict, the dreadful suffering which it caused for the sake of principle, the uprising of a great people, elevated and ennobled the whole country. The flood-gates were opened, and

the tremendous tide of national feeling swept away every meaner emotion. We came out of the battle, after an experience which brought a sudden maturity with it, stronger than ever, but much graver and soberer than before. We came out self-poised and self-reliant, with a true sense of dignity and of our national greatness, which years of peaceful development could not have given us. The sensitiveness to foreign opinion which had been the marked feature of our mental condition before the war had disappeared. It had vanished in the smoke of battle, as the colonial spirit disappeared from our politics in the war of 1812. Englishmen and Frenchmen have come and gone, and written their impressions of us, and made little splashes in the current of every-day topics, and have been forgotten. Just now it is the fashion for every Englishman who visits this country, particularly if he is a man of any note, to go home and tell the world what he thinks of us. Some of these writers do this without taking the trouble to come here first. Sometimes we read what they have to say out of curiosity. We accept what is true, whether unpalatable or not, philosophically, and smile at what is false. The general feeling is one of wholesome indifference. We no longer see salvation and happiness in favorable foreign opinion, or misery in the reverse. The colonial spirit in this direction also is practically extinct.

But while this is true of the mass of the American people whose mental health is good, and is also true of the great body of sound public opinion in the United

States, it has some marked exceptions; and these exceptions constitute the lingering remains of the colonial spirit, which survives, and shows itself here and there even at the present day, with a strange vitality.

In the years which followed the close of the war, it seemed as if colonialism had been utterly extinguished: but, unfortunately, this was not the case. The multiplication of great fortunes, the growth of a class rich by inheritance, and the improvement in methods of travel and communication, all tended to carry large numbers of Americans to Europe. The luxurious fancies which were born of increased wealth, and the intellectual tastes which were developed by the advance of the higher education, and to which an old civilization offers peculiar advantages and attractions, combined to breed in many persons a love of foreign life and foreign manners. These tendencies and opportunities have revived the dying spirit of colonialism. We see it most strongly in the leisure class, which is gradually increasing in this country. During the miserable ascendency of the Second Empire, a band of these persons formed what was known as the "American colony," in Paris. Perhaps they still exist; if so, their existence is now less flagrant and more decent. When they were notorious they presented the melancholy spectacle of Americans admiring and aping the manners, habits, and vices of another nation, when that nation was bent and corrupted by the cheap, meretricious, and rotten system of the third Napoleon. They furnished a very of-

fensive example of peculiarly mean colonialism. This particular phase has departed, but the same sort of Americans are, unfortunately, still common in Europe. I do not mean, of course, those persons who go abroad to buy social consideration, nor the women who trade on their beauty or their wits to gain a brief and dishonoring notoriety. These last are merely adventurers and adventuresses, who are common to all nations. The people referred to here form that large class, comprising many excellent men and women, no doubt, who pass their lives in Europe, mourning over the inferiority of their own country, and who become thoroughly denationalized. They do not change into Frenchmen or Englishmen, but are simply disfigured and deformed Americans.

We find the same wretched habit of thought in certain groups among the rich and idle people of our great eastern cities, especially in New York, because it is the metropolis. These groups are for the most part made up of young men who despise everything American and admire everything English. They talk and dress and walk and ride in certain ways, because they imagine that the English do these things after that fashion. They hold their own country in contempt, and lament the hard fate of their birth. They try to think that they form an aristocracy, and become at once ludicrous and despicable. The virtues which have made the upper classes in England what they are, and which take them into public affairs, into literature and politics, are forgotten, for Anglo-Ameri-

cans imitate the vices or the follies of their models, and stop there. If all this were merely a fleeting fashion, an attack of Anglo-mania or of Gallo-mania, of which there have been instances enough everywhere, it would be of no consequence. But it is a recurrence of the old and deep-seated malady of colonialism. It is a lineal descendant of the old colonial family. The features are somewhat dim now, and the vitality is low, but there is no mistaking the hereditary traits. The people who thus despise their own land, and ape English manners, flatter themselves with being cosmopolitans, when in truth they are genuine colonists, petty and provincial to the last degree.

We see a like tendency in the same limited but marked way in our literature. Some of our cleverest fiction is largely devoted to studying the character of our countrymen abroad; that is, either denationalized Americans or Americans with a foreign background. At times this species of literature resolves itself into an agonized effort to show how foreigners regard us, and to point out the defects which jar upon foreign susceptibilities even while it satirizes the denationalized American. The endeavor to turn ourselves inside out in order to appreciate the trivialities of life which impress foreigners unpleasantly is very unprofitable exertion, and the Europeanized American is not worth either study or satire. Writings of this kind, again, are intended to be cosmopolitan in tone, and to evince a knowledge of the world, and yet they are in

reality steeped in colonialism. We cannot but regret the influence of a spirit which wastes fine powers of mind and keen perceptions in a fruitless striving and a morbid craving to know how we appear to foreigners, and to show what they think of us.

We see, also, men and women of talent going abroad to study art and remaining there. The atmosphere of Europe is more congenial to such pursuits, and the struggle as nothing to what must be encountered here. But when it leads to an abandonment of America, the result is wholly vain. Sometimes these people become tolerably successful French artists, but their nationality and individuality have departed, and with them originality and force. The admirable school of etching which has arisen in New York; the beautiful work of American wood-engraving; the Chelsea tiles of Low, which have won the highest prizes at English exhibitions; the silver of Tiffany, specimens of which were bought by the Japanese commissioners at the Paris Exposition, are all strong, genuine work, and are doing more for American art, and for all art, than a wilderness of over-educated and denationalized Americans who are painting pictures and carving statues and writing music in Europe or in the United States, in the spirit of colonists, and bowed down by a wretched dependence.

There is abundance of splendid material all about us here for the poet, the artist, or the novelist. The conditions are not the same as in Europe, but they are not on that account inferior. They are certainly as

good. They may be better. Our business is not to grumble because they are different, for that is colonial. We must adapt ourselves to them, for we alone can use properly our own resources; and no work in art or literature ever has been, or ever will be, of any real or lasting value which is not true, original, and independent.

If these remnants of the colonial spirit and influence were, as they look at first sight, merely trivial accidents, they would not be worth mentioning. But the range of their influence, although limited, affects an important class. It appears almost wholly among the rich or the highly educated in art and literature; that is, to a large extent among men and women of talent and refined sensibilities. The follies of those who imitate English habits belong really to but a small portion of even their own class. But as these follies are contemptible, the wholesome prejudice which they excite is naturally, but thoughtlessly, extended to all who have anything in common with those who are guilty of them. In this busy country of ours, the men of leisure and education, although increasing in number, are still few, and they have heavier duties and responsibilities than anywhere else. Public charities, public affairs, politics, literature, all demand the energies of such men. To the country which has given them wealth and leisure and education they owe the duty of faithful service, because they, and they alone, can afford to do that work which must be done without pay. The few who are imbued with the colo-

nial spirit not only fail in their duty, and become contemptible and absurd, but they injure the influence and thwart the activity of the great majority of those who are similarly situated, and who are also patriotic and public spirited.

In art and literature the vain struggle to be somebody or something other than an American, the senseless admiration of everything foreign, and the morbid anxiety about our appearance before foreigners have the same deadening effect. Such qualities were bad enough in 1820. They are a thousand times meaner and more foolish now. They retard the march of true progress, which here, as elsewhere, must be in the direction of nationality and independence. This does not mean that we are to expect or to seek for something utterly different, something new and strange, in art, literature, or society. Originality is thinking for one's self. Simply to think differently from other people is eccentricity. Some of our English cousins, for instance, have undertaken to hold Walt Whitman up as the herald of the coming literature of American democracy, merely because he departed from all received forms, and indulged in barbarous eccentricities. They mistake difference for originality. When Whitman did best, he was nearest to the old and well-proved forms. We, like our contemporaries everywhere, are the heirs of the ages, and we must study the past, and learn from it, and advance from what has been already tried and found good. That is the only way to success anywhere, or in anything. But we cannot enter upon

that or any other road until we are truly national and independent intellectually, and are ready to think for ourselves, and not look to foreigners in order to find out what they think.

To those who grumble and sigh over the inferiority of America we may commend the opinion of a distinguished Englishman, as they prefer such authority. Mr. Herbert Spencer said, recently, "I think that whatever difficulties they may have to surmount, and whatever tribulations they may have to pass through, the Americans may reasonably look forward to a time when they will have produced a civilization grander than any the world has known." Even the Englishmen whom our provincials of to-day adore, even those who are most hostile, pay a serious attention to America. That keen respect for success and anxious deference to power so characteristic of Great Britain find expression every day, more and more, in the English interest in the United States, now that we do not care in the least about it; and be it said in passing, no people despises more heartily than the English a man who does not love his country. To be despised abroad, and regarded with contempt and pity at home, is not a very lofty result of so much effort on the part of our lovers of the British. But it is the natural and fit reward of colonialism. Members of a great nation instinctively patronize colonists.

It is interesting to examine the sources of the colonial spirit, and to trace its influence upon our history and its gradual decline. The study of a habit of mind,

with its tenacity of life, is an instructive and entertaining branch of history. But if we lay history and philosophy aside, the colonial spirit as it survives to-day, although curious enough, is a mean and noxious thing, which cannot be too quickly or too thoroughly stamped out. It is the dying spirit of dependence, and wherever it still clings it injures, weakens, and degrades. It should be exorcised rapidly and completely, so that it will never return. I cannot close more fitly than with the noble words of Emerson : —

"Let the passion for America cast out the passion for Europe. They who find America insipid, they for whom London and Paris have spoiled their own homes, can be spared to return to those cities. I not only see a career at home for more genius than we have, but for more than there is in the world."

FRENCH OPINIONS OF THE UNITED STATES.

1840—1881.

FRENCH books of travel are not uncommon, because every Frenchman who leaves home is so struck by the fact of his expatriation that, as a rule, he immediately writes and publishes his impressions, even if he does no more than cross the Rhine. French travelers, however, are scarce, because wandering in distant lands is distasteful and irksome to the gifted race to which they belong. We have been surfeited with books about the United States by traveling Englishmen, both eminent and obscure, but descriptions of the United States, and of the manners and customs of our people, by intelligent and cultivated Frenchmen are not common. The two volumes by M. de Bacourt and by the Vicomte d'Haussonville [1] are, therefore, well worth consideration, and they have an especial interest from the strong contrast they present, both in the character of the writers and in the result of their observations. They give a most striking picture, also,

[1] De Bacourt, *Souvenirs d'un Diplomate. Lettres Intimes sur l'Amérique.* 1882.

À Travers les États-Unis. Notes et Impressions. Par le Vicomte d'Haussonville, Ancien Député. 1883.

of the vast changes in the United States in the interval of forty years which separates them, and, unlike most books of travel, afford an interesting and suggestive opportunity of understanding certain phases of character peculiar to their authors and to the nation of which they are representatives.

Apart from general historical and philosophical considerations, M. de Bacourt's book is a very poor one. It is not even amusing, except on rare occasions; and in this respect the author is inferior to most of his countrymen, who, even when they are very ignorant, almost always contrive to be entertaining. French ignorance, in fact, is often more amusing than the wisdom of other people, but the worthy De Bacourt is distinctly dull. This much may be said for him, however: the work of his editress is far worse than his own.

The book, nevertheless, is interesting in three ways: first, because it has been published; secondly, as typical of a very marked quality of the French mind; and thirdly, because some of the incidents which the author saw and noted have a historical and comparative value to Americans.

The publication of such a book illustrates a fashion, just now much in vogue in Europe, and especially in England, of paying a great deal of attention to this country. Our civil war and its triumphant result; our rapid payment of the national debt; our marvelous growth in wealth, prosperity, and population; in one word, our success, have within a few

years brought home to the perceptions of the Old World a fact which only their own carelessness or stupidity prevented their seeing before. They have lately discovered that a great factor in the affairs of mankind, and a nation of vast and, in the future, of overshadowing power, has arisen on this side of the Atlantic. Our cousins of England, from a variety of causes, but chiefly from their unrivaled instinct and keen respect for material success, were the first to make the discovery. It is astonishing to see how much of current English literature, particularly in reviews and newspapers, is devoted to this country, and to our sayings and doings in every department of human activity. Crowds of Englishmen come here to-day where a handful came twenty years ago, and almost every man of any distinction among them goes home and writes his impressions about our country, government, society, and manners. In the years before the war there was hardly an Englishman who did not abuse us, more or less ignorantly, whenever he thought about us at all, which was not often. We were then very anxious about foreign opinion, very greedy for it, and very sensitive to it. Now, when we get a great deal of it, and an abundance of praise and wonder to boot, we are, as we ought to be, quite indifferent to the whole business. We sometimes read the various lucubrations from a feeling of curiosity, accept what is just, smile at the blunders, and forget the whole thing very quickly. But most of this foreign criticism, besides paying us the greatest compliment possible by

giving a close study to our institutions and prospects, is often in a tone of admiration, almost invariably of respect.

Such is the general drift of foreign opinion; but there is a class, on the other side of the Atlantic, who regard us with very different feelings from those commonly entertained. This is the Tory class. We mean by this those persons, in many cases, perhaps, belonging to noble families, whose interests and affections are bound up with the past, and who hate modern tendencies with a purblind hatred. Such people have always detested, and until lately have despised, the United States. They detest us as much as ever, but their contempt has changed to alarm. They perceive plainly that our success and greatness mean the success and greatness of democracy, and they regard democracy, rightly enough, as their direst foe. We notice in these quarters, therefore, that interest in the United States takes the form of an eager effort to discredit us, and, through us, democracy and republican institutions generally. Contemptuous abuse, it is obvious even to them, is no longer of any value. The case has become too serious for that. Take, for example, the "Saturday Review." That journal, now in its decline, was wont, in its palmy days, to refer to us occasionally, in order to hold up our worthlessness to the hissing and scorn of all well-regulated nations, and also to give vent to the asperity which a large investment in Confederate bonds naturally engendered in the breast of its proprietor. Nobody ever cared much for what

the "Saturday Review" said, except to have a little fun with its articles; and now that it has grown duller no one here cares a straw about it, one way or the other. But, as we have become indifferent, the tone of "the Saturday Review" has changed. It is now very sensitive to our criticism, and much annoyed by what we say, and rushes about in a defensive way, seeking warlike material. In this pursuit it tries to discredit us, and, besides taking great comfort in Mr. Henry James's statement that we no longer speak English, it has lately been digging up the dried mud of Dickens's "American Notes" and "Martin Chuzzlewit," and has been throwing that about in default of anything better. There is something rather pleasing in the annoyance which American opinion on various matters is giving to the worthy persons who conduct that periodical; but the matter is of no consequence except as an illustration of the blind Tory prejudice to which I have alluded. We are apt, however, to forget that the same class exists in Paris, in the Faubourg St. Germain, as well as in London. The French Tories seem to have a vague notion that successful democracy in America is helping to bury still deeper the dead Bourbonism which they love. They dimly feel that it is a good thing to put that democracy in an odious light, and hence the publication of M. de Bacourt's private letters. The preface discloses very frankly the purpose of the book, which is published in order to injure us in public opinion, and if the editress is amused thereby no one else can object, for it

certainly does not hurt us. There can be, in fact, no other motive than political and social antipathy, inasmuch as the book, except for a slight historical value to a limited circle of American readers, is completely without interest or importance. But as an emanation of the Tory mind, as a specimen of the Tory anxiety in regard to the United States, the publication of these letters is a curious and suggestive incident.

The book is, however, still more interesting as the expression and example of a highly typical French mind. M. de Bacourt was a gentleman of good family. He had literary tastes, was the editor of the Mirabeau and Talleyrand papers, a scholar and man of the world. More than all this, he had passed a large part of his life in diplomacy. As a diplomatist, and as the friend and literary executor of Talleyrand, he had an extensive acquaintance with the interests, the affairs, and the character of nations other than his own, as well as a thorough familiarity with modern history. A man of such antecedents and of such habits and training would seem to have been almost ideally fitted for a traveler, observer, and critic. Yet, as these letters show, he was utterly unable to understand a foreign nation even in the dimmest way. He had not even the capacity of setting down intelligently what he saw; and such was his mental blindness that he saw scarcely anything. All this was due to the simple fact that M. de Bacourt was a Frenchman of a numerous and well-known class; and he rises, in this way, to the dignity of one of those extreme and well-defined types which,

under the modern comparative system of investigation and study, are at once so satisfactory and so attractive.

There are no people on the earth, except the Chinese, having any claim to be called civilized who are such absolute slaves to local limitations as the French. As a rule they know nothing, and wish to know nothing, of other nations. There is, of course, in every country a large body of ignorance in regard to foreign nations and foreign countries; but in France there is an arrogant and complacent ignorance in this respect, to which the exceptions are so few that it may almost be called universal. It includes all classes and degrees, from the aristocrat who follows the white flag and the men of the highest education down to the idlers of the Boulevard and the blue-shirted workmen of the Faubourgs. To Frenchmen Paris is at this moment not only the great centre of light and life, but they hardly recognize the existence of any other considerable city. They are still living in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when French was the language of the polite world, and when the princelings of Germany and their courtiers mangled the language, and complimented by a brutal imitation the vices and follies of the "great people." They have not yet awakened to the fact that the great world outside of their boundaries is sweeping by them, and that civilized mankind, as has been cleverly said, "might now be divided into two nations: those who speak English and those who do not." Hardly ten years have elapsed since France was

crushed, in the short space of six months, under the iron heel of military conquest, and a principal cause of all this disgrace and disaster was her persistent, complacent, crass ignorance of her next-door neighbors. If the French were narrowed and degraded like the Spaniards, if they were slow of mind like the Germans, this intellectual malformation would not be so surprising. But they are among the quickest witted of the sons of men. They have attained the highest distinction, compatible with a lack of the loftiest imagination, in literature, science, and art, and in every department of intellectual life. They are thrifty, industrious, and frugal. Their resources have but recently astonished the world. Yet they are steadily, although very slowly, dropping behind; and examination reveals that the decline of France, which is destined to increase more rapidly in the future than it has in the past, is mainly due to the colossal conceit of her people, and to their inability and unwillingness to know, or understand, anything or indeed anybody outside of their own boundaries, or to live in any country but their own.

Every one who has read knows how few French travelers there have been. Every one who has journeyed in Europe or elsewhere is aware that, while all the rest of the world travels, Frenchmen, comparatively speaking, are rarely to be met with. This apparently trivial phenomenon has a profound significance. It is the superficial indication of the absence of the wandering, adventurous, enterprising spirit

which has enabled certain races to adapt themselves to new regions and new conditions, and thus win wealth and honor and found new states. The great nations of the earth, the few which have ruled the world and made its history, have been those possessing the genius of colonization. Other nations have risen and decayed, while these endured, and their influence has survived every chance and change. There have been but three: the Greek, the Roman, and the English. If we look at modern times, we see the importance of colonization at a glance. Holland, Portugal, Spain, all rose to great although temporary power by acquisitions in the New World. Germany did not rise during the same period, for she was rent internally, and had no colonies. Venice alone in Italy rose high in the political scale, and Venice colonized. France saw the value of the policy and sent out expeditions. She forcibly transported settlers to Canada; but her colonies did not flourish, for the right spirit did not exist, either among the colonists or in the smothering atmosphere of despotism and paternal government in the mother country. There was a great struggle for supremacy in colonization, and in 1760 England prevailed and dominated the world, while France lost the colonies she had, and never regained them or established new ones. The English empire of that day has been torn asunder; but the English race, because it possessed the genius for colonization, because it saw the opportunities beyond its own borders, was adventurous and enterprising, and could shape itself to new conditions, is still

supreme. The English people, outside of Great Britain, possess the northern and have a controlling influence over the southern continent of the Western hemisphere. Australia, the new continent, is theirs, and South Africa. They are the rulers of India and of a multitude of smaller states. One hundred millions of people speak to-day the English tongue, and their combined wealth and power more than equals that of all the rest of the world. How small and contracted France appears, in comparison with this mighty English race, whose intellectual and material progress have gone hand in hand! France owes her inferiority to her own narrowness. All the adventurous, colonizing spirit she ever had left her, together with much else of saving grace, when she drove out the Huguenots, the flower of her people, and let them carry to England and America fresh elements of strength and power. It seems a little thing to say, that a nation is narrow-minded and incapable of understanding other nations and other lands, when the classic contempt for the "barbarian," the same thing in another form, is a distinguishing characteristic of strong races. Yet it is this contracted and illiberal turn of mind which deprived France of colonies, and which now impedes her progress, and is drawing her down to an inferior place in the scale of nations.

This is the broad historical view of the question; but in M. de Bacourt's letters we can see this spirit of French provincialism manifested in its very essence. We do not mean by this his abuse and dislike of the

United States. That he should abuse and dislike us was natural enough, and has nothing to do with the mental deficiency of his race, of which I have been speaking. The difficulty with M. de Bacourt, as with most of his fellow-countrymen, is not that his opinion is favorable or unfavorable in regard to another race or country, but that he has no reasons for any view, one way or the other, except that a given thing is or is not after his own fashion. Frenchmen, in short, of the De Bacourt type cannot usually understand anything that is not French. They either admire stupidly, or as stupidly condemn, — usually the latter. From narrowness, and not from conscious strength, they regard foreigners as barbarians, *ex vi termini*, and their faculties never seem to get beyond the Chinese wall of complacent ignorance by which they are inclosed. M. de Bacourt indulged in many sapient reflections, instead of setting down what he observed, and he never went below the surface of things, — another quite common failing of his race. He appreciated the natural scenery of America, and admired it, and thus he was led to comprehend dimly that this was a land of magnificent opportunities. He also perceived that there was a dangerous diversity of opinion between the South and the North on the question of slavery, and he thought, rather vaguely, that a war might grow out of these differences. It would have been abnormal, even in M. de Bacourt, to have failed to see this, but his admiring niece points it out as an instance of almost superhuman perspicacity. With this exception, every conclusion drawn by M. de

Bacourt — and he drew a great many, on very slight premises — is hopelessly and invariably wrong. For instance, he saw placards in the railway stations warning the public to beware of pickpockets, and he concluded that we were a nation of thieves. There were a number of suicides at one time while he was here, and he immediately made up his mind that we were all preparing to cut our throats, and that these suicides were a proof of the failure of our institutions and of our civilization. He says, to take an example of a more serious kind, that the South was democratic, and the North aristocratic. It is obvious, one would think, to the meanest understanding, that the direct reverse was the case. A system founded on slavery is necessarily aristocratic, while the industrial and agricultural communities of the North were conspicuously and plainly democratic, in the very nature of things. If any one had stated to M. de Bacourt in Paris, as an abstract proposition, that slave-holders formed a democratic society, he would have set his informant down as an ignorant babbler. Yet in the United States he exhibited precisely this shallow and unthinking folly himself. Any number of similar examples could be cited, but these suffice to show the profound inability of a large class of Frenchmen to understand or reason upon anything outside of France.

This brings us to the third point of interest in M. de Bacourt's book, what he actually saw and heard in the United States in 1840. There is no such word as "home" in the French language, and no such thing as

"home," as we understand it, in French cities. Yet there is no one who suffers so acutely from home-sickness as a Frenchman out of France. The "*mal du pays*" afflicts the "great people" to an unequaled extent. M. de Bacourt, when he was sent as minister to this country, suffered from a well-defined attack of nostalgia, and he was, moreover, in wretched health; two circumstances which increased the natural gloom of the situation. After he had been in America nearly a month, the only gleam of light was in the fact that he had met a few people who remembered Talleyrand; a touching example of French open-mindedness and intelligence. The whole case may be summed up very briefly. M. de Bacourt was utterly and profoundly disgusted with everything and everybody. This was perfectly natural, and in a certain degree not unreasonable. He came from the high civilization of Paris to a civilization crude in the extreme. We had cast off the habits and customs borrowed from Europe in colonial days; we had not yet established and defined our own habits and customs. Everything was in a formative condition. It was a state of solution, and a period of transition. Manners were free and easy. Education had spread, but had not advanced proportionately, and the art of living was entirely undeveloped.

The condition of the large cities, even, was rough and unattractive, and Washington was inexpressibly dreary. A few great public buildings, some straggling, ill-built houses, and clusters of negro shanties

made up the capital city of the Union. The highways were unpaved, dusty in summer, and so muddy during the rest of the year as to be almost impassable. Cattle and swine ran loose in the streets, making night hideous with their noise, and women milked their cows at the edge of the sidewalks. To a native of Paris this was not agreeable. The other cities were scarcely better. Baltimore resembled Washington; New York, given up to trade and commerce, M. de Bacourt thought thoroughly repulsive. He refers to it as a confused, hot, dirty, unfinished place, the resort of all the adventurers on the continent. The appearance of Boston pleased him. He describes it as a handsome English city, well built and well ordered, clean, and free from cattle and pigs. But he found it very dull, and the cold climate and the dislike of the French which pervaded society led him to give his final preference to Philadelphia, which had most of the material advantages of Boston without its drawbacks. At best, however, it was a mere choice of evils.

American politics touched their lowest point during the administration of Mr. Polk. It is the fashion to speak of politics and political life as of a lower order at the present day than ever before; but this is a complete mistake. The decline in our politics set in with Andrew Jackson, and they began to improve after Mr. Polk's administration. They advanced but slightly for many years, but still progress has been steady. It is very true that at this moment we have no men of such ability as Webster, Clay, and Calhoun in public

life; but the general tone of politics to-day, at Washington especially, is infinitely better than when those distinguished leaders were at the height of their reputation. The brutality, the coarseness, the financial dishonesty and disaster resulting from Jackson's overthrow of the bank, the low tone of the politics of that period, and the savagery engendered by slavery have almost wholly disappeared. When M. de Bacourt came here, in 1840, we were very nearly at our lowest point. He was disgusted beyond reason with what he saw, but not wholly without cause. The trouble with M. de Bacourt was not that he disliked his surroundings and the manners of the people whom he met, but that he at once concluded, in the most empty-headed way, that these outside appearances and these superficial defects, many of them inevitable, told the whole story, and that the entire republic was a crude and vulgar failure. He believed that the men of English race, who had mastered the continent, and incidentally driven the French out of it, could not make the most of their opportunities, and were going helplessly and hopelessly to pieces. A moment's historical reflection would have shown him the absurdity of this reasoning; but he was a Frenchman, his dinners were bad, the manners of the people were rough, there were evil things in politics, and hence everything was necessarily doomed to ruin. It was not French, in short, and therefore no good could come of it. To a man accustomed to the kaleidoscopic changes of system in France, where a bookseller of revolutionary times told a gen-

tleman who asked for a copy of the constitution, "that he did not deal in periodical literature," the stability of American government and the sound common sense and robust energy of the American people were sealed books, because there was nothing in his experience to tell him of the existence or the value of such qualities. M. de Bacourt summed up his ideas by saying that the American people were second and third rate Englishmen, and that, as M. Talleyrand said, their society lacked solid foundation, because the people had no moral sense. There is something perfectly grotesque in this last assertion. Talleyrand was a great man, but he was no more fit to judge of "moral sense" than a Hottentot is to criticise the Dresden Madonna. There may have been men in public life more free from the burden of a moral sense than Talleyrand, but it would not be easy to find them. His only connection with the United States was when he tried to force bribes from the American envoys in 1798. These immoral men, believing that they were insulted, thereupon left France, and their country prepared for war, which soon brought the "great republic" to terms. That M. Talleyrand regarded such conduct as proof positive of a lack of sense I have no doubt; and in matters of bribery and intrigue he was a good judge, but on morality his criticisms are not equally valuable.

M. de Bacourt's judgment of our public men was largely determined by their attitude towards the duties on French wines and silks. Van Buren, who was

friendly to him on this point, he kindly refers to as an excellent "imitation of a gentleman," and regrets his defeat when a candidate for reëlection. He rather liked Clay, who was a true type, as he puts it, of the English "gentleman farmer." Calhoun he also liked, and Poinsett and Ewing. Webster, who was "anti-French," he depicts as pompous, pretentious, and tiresome. He further describes Mr. Webster's getting drunk at dinner, and then making a maudlin speech to him. This charming incident his niece calls special attention to in the preface. Generally M. de Bacourt spoke the truth. In this case he went beyond the truth, very obviously, and committed the great blunder of not making his scandal reasonable. The effect of wine on Mr. Webster was to make him dull and heavy, moody and sleepy, not talkative and foolish. That he took too much madeira at the President's dinner is, unfortunately, not improbable; that he afterwards made a maudlin speech to M. de Bacourt, like a tipsy sophomore, strikes one as the rather clumsy invention of a personal enemy. M. de Bacourt is, however, unlucky in all he says about Webster. He speaks of him as a second-rate Englishman, and a sillier description could hardly have been devised. Webster was a thorough, pure-blooded American, of a strongly American type, and as unlike an Englishman in looks as it is possible for an American to be. It was reserved for M. de Bacourt to be the only man of any race or creed who was so innately petty as not to be impressed by Webster's superb physical presence and leonine look.

The bitterest hatred of the French minister, however, was kept for John Quincy Adams, who opposed his wishes as to the tariff and exposed his lobbying with the committees. De Bacourt exults, with the delight of a mean spirit, over the attacks made upon the gallant old man when he presented the Haverhill petition. Two other congressmen, Mr. Winthrop of Massachusetts and Mr. Kennedy of Maryland, M. de Bacourt found more "*comme il faut*" than anybody he met.

The French are proverbially witty, and all the world enjoys their wit; but they are usually devoid of any sense of humor, and of the power of appreciating any wit but their own. This was a marked defect in M. de Bacourt. He was, for example, frequently advised to marry, and good-naturedly joked with on this subject, and this harmless nonsense he took in dead earnest, and considered it very indelicate. At one time it was a bit of fun to put on a visiting-card G. T. T., "Gone to Texas;" which M. de Bacourt considered a mark of national depravity, as well as irreverent to the sacred P. P. C. of France. But the hardest blow was when the newspapers spoke of Dickens, Lafayette, Fanny Ellsler, and the Prince de Joinville "in that order," as the unhappy De Bacourt indignantly exclaims.

It will not be amiss to make one extract before leaving the book and turning to the Vicomte d'Haussonville. It is an amusing account of an interview which M. de Bacourt had with some members of the

cabinet when he was calling on Mr. Ewing, the Secretary of the Treasury. "We had only exchanged a few words," he says, "when Mr. Crittenden, the Attorney-General, Mr. Bell, Secretary of War, and Mr. Badger, Secretary of the Navy, came in. Mr. Badger was smoking a cigar, which he did not extinguish; Mr. Bell threw himself upon a sofa, putting his feet upon one of the arms, thus showing us the soles of his boots; as to Mr. Crittenden, as he was very warm, he threw off his coat, and took from his pocket a bit of tobacco, which he placed in his mouth to chew. They all took a joking tone with me, which I was obliged to assume with them, in order not to offend men who are very influential in our commercial affairs." The description of President Harrison's reception of the diplomatic corps is too long for quotation, but is equally amusing.

A word in conclusion as to the editing, for that, too, is in its way illustrative and suggestive of the Tory attitude toward the United States. M. de Bacourt evidently understood English sufficiently to write it correctly, but almost every other English word in the book is grotesquely misspelled. The blunders were made, evidently, in copying. They are so obvious that one would think the average Parisian cabman would have known enough to correct them; but they are clearly beyond the scholarship of the Comtesse de Mirabeau. There is another and more serious fault. I should be the last to favor suppression in any historical documents, but the personal appearance of

ladies and gentlemen in the families where M. de Bacourt was received has neither historical nor public interest. The only names suppressed are those of some obscure French people in New York, while all others are given in full, although often disguised by very strange spelling. M. de Bacourt, as was perfectly proper in confidential letters to an intimate friend, wrote frankly of everything he saw in private houses. To print all this criticism upon ladies and gentlemen who were entirely in private life, and some of whom are still living, is a gross breach of hospitality and a piece of dishonorable ingratitude. The sin lies at the door of the lady who edited the letters, and it argues a lack of that good feeling which is the foundation of good manners, and shows the same illiberality and narrowness of view which induced the publication of the book.

As I have said that the book is poor and of little value, my readers may be inclined to apply to me the Italian proverb, that "no one throws stones at a tree which has no fruit." I can only reply, in excuse, that a poor book may be very suggestive; and this can truly be said of M. de Bacourt's letters, although few persons would be repaid for the trouble of reading them.

It is quite different with the "Notes and Impressions" of the Vicomte d'Haussonville, written more than forty years after the visit of M. de Bacourt, and it is a relief to turn from the discontented minister to the amiable guest of the United States at the York-

town celebration. This is not due to the fact that the latter judges us more kindly than the former, for the Vicomte finds much to criticise. It must be chiefly attributed to the fact that M. d'Haussonville wrote more pleasantly and brightly, was more open-minded, and much more disposed to take a cheerful and philosophical view of matters and things than his predecessor.

There is, as I have already said, a most curious contrast in every way between the two books. It would be difficult to imagine a more striking picture of the marvelous progress of the United States than is presented by a comparison of De Bacourt's description of the crude, unformed civilization, the undeveloped society, the uncomfortable every-day existence which he found here in 1840, with that given by the Vicomte d'Haussonville in the impressions which he gathered during his hasty visit in 1881. One can scarcely believe that the two men are writing about the same country. It must be admitted, however, that the difference between the United States in 1840 and in 1881 is hardly more marked than the contrast between De Bacourt and D'Haussonville themselves. The former, if judged by his book, was a shallow, narrow-minded man, feeble, discontented, and possessing but little imagination. The latter is a shrewd and careful observer, liberal, kindly, generous, with a great deal of imagination, and a pleasant tinge of French romanticism, at which he himself is strongly inclined to smile a little sadly as one of the memories of youthful days.

There are many passages which show M. d'Haussonville to have a strong sense of humor, and he is invariably good-tempered; but his book is sober and thoughtful, with no effort to be brilliant or witty, and ought to find many readers in this country. It is, perhaps, not so strongly typical of a marked mental conformation as that of De Bacourt, but it well repays, both in interest and instruction, a careful perusual.

I shall not attempt to examine it as minutely as it deserves, or to do more than touch upon some of its most salient points. It is chiefly interesting in this connection for comparison, and for some of the criticisms, which in the case of a traveler of this sort are well worth consideration. It may be said at the outset that M. d'Haussonville found nothing of "that strange and eccentric character which Frenchmen always foolishly expect to find in America." Another peculiarity is that he was thoroughly grateful for the sincere and hearty hospitality which was shown him, a pleasant quality which is not infrequently lacking in foreign visitors. As he gracefully says, in speaking of a fire in New York, he could not help wondering "whether one of the committee which had received us in the morning had not pushed his gallantry so far as to set fire to his house, in order to give us the pleasure of seeing it extinguished."

M. d'Haussonville has something to say on a large variety of subjects, and his remarks show great justice and keenness of apprehension. It will surprise some

of our Europeanized Americans to learn that he considers our press, even of the second and third class, to have far more news and to be much better edited than the French journals. He also found the former, despite their bitter political articles, singularly free from talk and gossip about private individuals, or about those persons who really desire privacy; and he adds that "*les faits scandaleux et les procès scabreux*," which occupy so large a space in such newspapers as the Paris "Figaro," are with us relegated to their proper place in a separate column.

He examined with great care, and on the whole sums up very accurately, the state of our politics; defining the Republicans as the centralizing, and the Democrats as the state's-rights, party, — a description which has perhaps more historical than contemporary exactness. The old memories and passions of the war, he thinks, are not quite dead, but the predominant, overmastering feelings at present are love for the Union and national pride. In his judgment, not only slavery, but secession as well, is effaced forever, and those who look for another separatist movement will be woefully disappointed, as they were when the country submitted without a murmur to the decision of the electoral commission. He studied with some care the results of the rebellion, and after every allowance for the evils it brought he says finely, when giving an account of his visit to Arlington, "After all, only a great people is capable of a great civil war."

At the same time, his admiration of results does not

blind him to existing evils. He points out the demoralizing mischief of the reconstruction period, and finds the perils which now menace us in the political corruption that crops out in our cities and in our great national departments. He regards the "spoils system" as part of the same deteriorating influence, and looks upon the inferior character and ability of men in politics and public life as a great misfortune. But M. d'Haussonville also believes that a reaction has begun; that public opinion, outside of active politicians, is a mighty force, and is both sound and strong. He hopes most, however, from the well-regulated love of liberty, characteristic of the race; the law-abiding instinct shown in the popular deference, as he puts it, for the policeman's "*baton;*" and the strong religious sentiments of the people. M. d'Haussonville says, too, that signs are not wanting to indicate the appearance of a higher class of men in politics, from which he draws encouragement as to our future. Although our political defects are marked, and even dangerous, he has no idea that they will prove fatal, and is of opinion that we have the ability to rise to the level of our unequaled opportunities. His views of our politics, and of our political prospects, without being very rosy or extremely optimistic, are on the whole cheerful, and praise and blame are both awarded with much moderation. He is perfectly satisfied, moreover, that those of his countrymen who speak of us as in a state of decadence are not only very ignorant and prejudiced, but utterly mistaken.

On social matters M. d'Haussonville is as suggestive as on matters political, and is far more amusing. In one place, he says that he wishes those who think there are no classes in America would come here and see for themselves. Social distinctions appeared to him very rigid, and affection for the past and for tradition very strong, — two easily explicable facts, which surprised him not a little. The latter admirable quality is part of the conservatism of the English race, and it is peculiarly vigorous in the United States from the very fact that our history is so brief and our own especial past so limited. As to the social distinctions in a country where all distinctions have been swept away, so far as laws and constitutions can do it, it is only natural that, from their inherent weakness and necessary frailty, they should be more jealously guarded than in other lands, where they are fortified by statute, custom, and authority. Very few persons trouble themselves about such matters, and the consideration of social distinctions is as a rule confined to empty-headed people with little to do, and to those who, having no social position, are anxious to gain one and therefore scrutinize their neighbors' claims with jealous snobbishness. The democracy and the equality are none the less real because these harmless and apparently rigid social distinctions exist or seem to exist in the United States. At most they only serve to amuse the idleness and tickle the vanity of a very insignificant class. There is no real life or force in any of them.

Apart from outward graces and refinements, our manners are, on the average and at bottom, better than those of any other people, and for a very simple reason. Democracy destroys forms, but it demands and breeds the kindliness and good-nature which are the essence of the best manners; and this fact M. d'Haussonville recognizes and admits. He makes an honest confession on this point after describing the Pullman-car conductor on the train to Chicago to whom he was formally introduced. After shaking hands the conductor discussed with him the French reception in Rhode Island and many other topics; all of which seemed to the Vicomte rather absurd, especially when he pressed a fee of two dollars into his friend's willing hand. But when he comes to the end of this little incident, he frankly grants that the conductor was, in all essentials, a better-mannered man than any of his class in Europe; and hence follows the further admission of this as a general truth applicable to the people of the country at large.

In whatever he says about society, however, M. d'Haussonville shows that penetrating perception of which his race is sometimes capable, and he places his finger with unerring accuracy upon that which is at once our most distinguished social peculiarity and our chief defect. The passage is worth quoting: "En Amérique lorsque vous partez pour une ville quelconque, on vous dit invariablement, 'Vous verrez là de très jolies jeunes filles, —*very pretty girls.*' En France on dirait, de très jolies femmes. Toute la différence dont

je parle se traduit par l'emploi de ces deux mots. En Amérique, c'est pour les jeunes filles qu'est organisé le mouvement social, — bal, cotillons, matinées, parties de campagne, tout roule sur elles; et les jeunes femmes, sans en être exclues, n'y prennent qu'une part restreinte, le plus souvent sous prétexte de chaperonner une ou plusieurs sœurs, cousines, ou amies. Les jeunes personnes vont également beaucoup au théâtre, dînent seules en ville, ou vont faire des séjours chez des amies mariées. . . . En un mot, elles comprennent la vie telle que la comprend cette vieille ballade du *Gâteau de la mariée*, qu'on récite ou qu'on récitait autrefois en Bretagne à chaque jeune fille le jour de ses noces : —

'Vous n'irez plus au bal,
Madame la mariée,'

et qui se termine par cet avertissement funèbre : —

'Ce gâteau est pour vous dire
Qu'il faut souffrir et mourir.'"

Nothing could be happier or more clever than this description of the system which prevails everywhere in the United States except in Washington, where it is necessarily limited by circumstances. American society, particularly what is called fashionable society, as now carried on, is apparently maintained solely for the benefit of young girls, and degenerates therefore into something little better than a marriage mart. The parents launch their offspring as well as possible, and display their wares to the greatest advantage, but the business of the market is managed

chiefly by the young girls themselves, instead of by their mothers as in England and Europe. There is no special objection to this method of transacting the business, but it is preposterous that young girls and their affairs should overshadow and shut out everything and everybody else. The result of this absorption in one class and one pursuit is that American society is often insufferably dull and flat. It is made up too exclusively of ignorant girls and their attendant boys. Half the education of a cultivated and attractive woman is of course that which is derived from society and from the world; and yet American society is almost entirely given up to the business of entertaining and marrying those who are necessarily wholly destitute of such an education. Another effect of the prevalence of social principles of this description is the supremacy of that most rustic and unattractive of habits, the pairing system, which converts society into a vast aggregation of *tête-à-têtes*. This prevails all over the world to a greater or less extent, but it should never reign supreme. The upshot of the whole thing with us is to drive out of society nearly all married people, — for marriage under such a system is destructive of social value; nearly all unmarried women over twenty-five, who are thought to have overstayed their market; and, finally, a considerable proportion of the unmarried men of thirty years of age and upwards. In other words, except at a few large balls and receptions, the best and most intelligent part of society is usually lacking. It has been pushed

aside, and is obliged to find all its social amusement in small coteries of its own. This retirement is of course voluntary, because the pairing system ruins general society, and makes it, in fact, impossible in the best and truest sense. A clever young Englishman not long ago expressed his surprise at the fact that, whenever he asked who a lady of a certain age, as the French say, might be, he was invariably told, not that she was Mrs. Blank, but that she was the mother of Miss Blank. The girl, like the boy, is properly the most insignificant member of society. When a young man goes forth into the world, he starts at the bottom of the ladder, and works his way up. The same rule should apply to young women in society. They have their place, and it is an important one; but they should not start in social life at the top, and then slowly descend. Such a system is against every law of nature or of art, and with its inevitable concomitant of universal *tête-à-têtes* makes really attractive general society impossible. We place the social pyramid upon its apex instead of upon its base, and then wonder that it is a poor, tottering, and unlovely object.

I have spoken of the contrast between M. d'Haussonville and M. de Bacourt, but there is one point of resemblance which curiously justifies what has been said of Frenchmen with reference to their lack of the adventurous, colonizing spirit which has made the English race so great and powerful. M. d'Haussonville talked with the emigrants on the "Canada," during

his voyage to this country, and wondered greatly at their courage. "Rather than boldly break," he says, "with the memories and the affections which help man to support life, I should prefer to continue to suffer where I have lived, and die where I was born." But, unlike M. de Bacourt, M. d'Haussonville admires the hardy spirit of the colonist and emigrant, and appreciates its importance and meaning. The French names of towns in the United States led him to mourn over the fact that the empire of France in the New World has departed, and that her influence, except in the matter of woman's dress and comic opera, is wholly extinct. "O France!" he cries, "chère patrie si douloureusement aimée, es-tu donc définitivement vaincue dans la grande lutte des nations, et comme la Grèce antique, en es-tu réduite à te venger du monde en lui donnant tes vices!" He concludes with an appeal to his country to at least preserve its love for the ideal, its sense of beauty, and its preference of beauty to utility, and ends with the wish that she may deserve to be called, as she has been named, the poet of nations, — a very strange idea in regard to a race which, with all its achievements, is almost wholly destitute of any really great poetry.

In the opinion of foreigners, it is said, we may anticipate the verdict of posterity. Certainly the observations of such a critic as M. d'Haussonville are well worth careful reflection, for they are entirely free from any of the advantages or disadvantages of a writer of kindred race, and they come wholly from the outside.

M. d'Haussonville deserves to be read for the intrinsic merit of his work. I have coupled him with M. de Bacourt, because the two books thus placed in juxtaposition gain a historical value and importance. The comparison is worth making, for it shows very clearly the enormous advances we have made in the last half century, and enables us to see, in the strongest light, the grounds we have for confidence and pride in our country, and what a responsibility the possession of such opportunities and of such a future imposes upon each and all of us.

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